

# **DWIGHT A. NELSON: RECOLLECTIONS OF MY LIFE AND WORK IN NEVADA EDUCATION, 1932-1945; AND JUVENILE PROBATION AND DETENTION IN WASHOE COUNTY, 1949-1969; A TERM AS WASHOE COUNTY COMMISSIONER**

Interviewee: Dwight A. Nelson

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## **Description**

Dwight A. Nelson was born in Carson Valley in 1911. He has been a teacher, restaurant worker, politician, and the chief juvenile probation officer for Washoe County, Nevada.

His concern for and interest in people, which is indispensable to probation work, is revealed when he talks about his family, boyhood, and university friends. It is still clearer when we read of his becoming a teacher, and of teachers' problems in rural Nevada (Minden, Lovelock, Ely and Fallon). He is proud of the success which has come to many former pupils, but he doesn't imply he deserves credit for their accomplishments. On the contrary, he credits the parents and the Nevada environment.

Dwight Nelson feels that working for his father in the Waldorf Restaurant in downtown Reno was involvement with people, but of a different kind than teaching. This was also a valuable preparation for his career in juvenile probation. He became the Washoe County probation officer for juveniles in 1949, and he developed the present extensive and modern operations and facilities from that one-man office beginning. He dealt with wholly inadequate resources of all kinds: the necessity of jailing children before the construction of Wittenberg Hall, a chronic shortage of staff, the hard necessity of refusing to send children to the boys' facility at Elko until it was improved so that human treatment and some protection from homosexual rape was provided.

Nelson's job was made more difficult by many who thought it useless to attempt to work with young offenders. They believed in simple solutions, such as "get tough, lock them up." He worked to achieve acceptance of a philosophy based on the knowledge that locking them up was a proven failure; that it only resulted in the same children returning as a greater threat to the community. He showed most of his detractors that the best way to protect the community was to help the child.



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An Oral History Conducted by Mary Ellen Glass

University of Nevada Oral History Program

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## PREFACE TO THE DIGITAL EDITION

Established in 1964, the University of Nevada Oral History Program (UNOHP) explores the remembered past through rigorous oral history interviewing, creating a record for present and future researchers. The program's collection of primary source oral histories is an important body of information about significant events, people, places, and activities in twentieth and twenty-first century Nevada and the West.

The UNOHP wishes to make the information in its oral histories accessible to a broad range of patrons. To achieve this goal, its transcripts must speak with an intelligible voice. However, no type font contains symbols for physical gestures and vocal modulations which are integral parts of verbal communication. When human speech is represented in print, stripped of these signals, the result can be a morass of seemingly tangled syntax and incomplete sentences—totally verbatim transcripts sometimes verge on incoherence. Therefore, this transcript has been lightly edited.

While taking great pains not to alter meaning in any way, the editor may have removed false starts, redundancies, and the “uhs,” “ahs,” and other noises with which speech is often liberally sprinkled; compressed some passages which, in unaltered form, misrepresent the chronicler's meaning; and relocated some material to place information in its intended context. Laughter is represented with [laughter] at the end of a sentence in which it occurs, and ellipses are used to indicate that a statement has been interrupted or is incomplete...or that there is a pause for dramatic effect.

As with all of our oral histories, while we can vouch for the authenticity of the interviews in the UNOHP collection, we advise readers to keep in mind that these are remembered pasts, and we do not claim that the recollections are entirely free of error. We can state, however, that the transcripts accurately reflect the oral history recordings on which they were based. Accordingly, each transcript should be approached with the

same prudence that the intelligent reader exercises when consulting government records, newspaper accounts, diaries, and other sources of historical information. All statements made here constitute the remembrance or opinions of the individuals who were interviewed, and not the opinions of the UNOHP.

In order to standardize the design of all UNOHP transcripts for the online database, most have been reformatted, a process that was completed in 2012. This document may therefore differ in appearance and pagination from earlier printed versions. Rather than compile entirely new indexes for each volume, the UNOHP has made each transcript fully searchable electronically. If a previous version of this volume existed, its original index has been appended to this document for reference only. A link to the entire catalog can be found online at <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/>.

For more information on the UNOHP or any of its publications, please contact the University of Nevada Oral History Program at Mail Stop 0324, University of Nevada, Reno, NV, 89557-0324 or by calling 775/784-6932.

Alicia Barber  
Director, UNOHP  
July 2012

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## INTRODUCTION

Dwight A. Nelson is a native Nevadan, born in Carson Valley in 1911. He has been a teacher, restaurant worker, politician, and most importantly, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer for Washoe County, Nevada. The introduction by Laurance M. Hyde, Jr., Dean of the National College of the State Judiciary, outlines and evaluates Mr. Nelson's account of his contributions in his several endeavors.

When invited to participate in the Oral History Project, Dwight Nelson accepted readily. He was a gracious and cooperative chronicler through thirteen recording sessions conducted at his home in Reno or at the University Library between March, 1970, and April, 1971. Mr. Nelson's review of his oral history script resulted in few changes in language and no significant deletions of material. A further contribution to knowledge of juvenile probation work in Washoe County is Mr. Nelson's generous donation of a series of scrapbooks on this topic, which have been deposited in the Special Collections Department of the University of Nevada, Reno, Library.

The Oral History Project of the University of Nevada, Reno, Library preserves the past and the present for future research by tape recording the reminiscences of persons who have been important to the development of Nevada and the West. Scripts resulting from the interviews are deposited in the Special Collections Departments of the University Libraries at Reno and Las Vegas. Dwight A. Nelson has generously assigned his literary rights in his oral history to the University of Nevada, Reno, and has designated his memoir as open for research.

Mary Ellen Glass  
University of Nevada, Reno  
1972



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## SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

This is the story of a life-long Nevadan, born in the Carson Valley as his mother had been.

I wanted to read it and prepare a foreword because I expected to be interested in his account of the development of juvenile services in Washoe County. I was not disappointed in that regard, but also found it a real pleasure to read about Dwight Nelson's boyhood and early adult life. His concern for, and interest in, people which is indispensable to probation work is revealed throughout this informal oral history. It is apparent when he talks about his family, his boyhood and his University friends. It is still clearer when we read of his becoming a teacher, of teachers' problems in rural Nevada (Minden, Lovelock, Ely and Fallon). He is proud of the success which has come to many former pupils, but he doesn't imply he deserves credit for their accomplishments. On the contrary, he credits the parents and the Nevada environment.

He feels that working for his father in the Waldorf Restaurant in downtown Reno was involvement with people, but of a different

kind than teaching. This was also a valuable preparation for his major career in juvenile probation.

Dwight Nelson became the Washoe County Probation Officer for juveniles in 1949. He developed the present extensive and modern operations and facilities from that one-man office beginning. He dealt with wholly inadequate resources of all kinds, including the necessity of jailing children before the construction of Wittenberg Hall, a chronic shortage of staff, the hard necessity of refusing to send children to the boys' facility at Elko until it was improved so that humane treatment and some protection from homosexual rape was provided.

Nelson's job was made more difficult by the many who think it useless to attempt to work with young offenders and who believe in simple solutions, such as "get tough, lock them up." He worked to achieve acceptance of a philosophy based on the knowledge that "locking them up" was a proven failure; that it only resulted in the same children returning as a greater threat to the community. He

showed most of his detractors that the best way to protect the community was to help the child.

This fascinating oral history ends with the beginnings of Dwight Nelson's new challenge as a member of the Washoe County Commission. I hope to have the chance to read another chapter about what happens when his insights, as one who has cared about and helped people all his life, are focused upon the problems of county government.

Laurance M. Hyde, Jr., Dean  
National College of the State Judiciary  
University of Nevada, Reno  
1972

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## MY EARLY LIFE, EDUCATION, AND CAREERS

I was born in Gardnerville, Nevada, Douglas County, on August the seventeenth, 1910. My mother was Margaret Barbara Brown Nelson, and she was, according to the family stories, the second white girl born in the town of Gardnerville. And my grandmother, Sarah Frey Brown Hayes, her mother, and my great-grandmother, Petrea Prescott Frey, both lived in Gardnerville, and in earlier years, had lived in Genoa, so that when I say I believe that Carson Valley is the most beautiful place in the state of Nevada, and that I love the mountains and the fields and the trees and the communities and the people, I suppose it goes back because of those several generations. Too, I still can vividly recall riding with my great-grandmother with a little buggy and a bay mare from Gardnerville to Minden, which is a distance of about one mile. And to make that trip to Minden with my great-grandmother was always dependent upon my “conduct, attitude, and behavior” [laughing]. And I suppose today you call it rewards or punishments, but I was involved in rewards at a very early age. If I had been

especially good, or my great-grandmother was especially liking me, why, I was even allowed to take the reins for a short time. Of course, that was even a bigger thrill. And I suppose as I got somewhat older, I probably used that to brag to younger brothers and a sister, or maybe even other youngsters in the neighborhood.

My mother’s father, George Brown, and mother had a hotel in Gardnerville. It was called the East Fork. And it was a combination rooms, dining room, and saloon. And they had Chinese cooks in the kitchen, and my mother could tell some very interesting stories about some of those fine gentlemen of the yellow race that were in Carson Valley in those days, one in particular who worked for them for a number of years, saving every dime he possibly could and then returning to China to marry and spend the rest of his life.

I was the oldest of four natural children of my parents. But I was the oldest of six, in that my mother and father (Arthur P. “Art” Nelson) raised two of my cousins, Charley W. and George F. Brown. They were the sons

of my mother's brother, Charles. And those boys lost their mother in childbirth, and then, when their father died and they were full orphans, my mother and father took them into our home. Now, they were never legally adopted because neither of my parents felt that they should give up their name of Brown. But in all other respects, they were our brothers, and they are my two brothers, and they are living today, and they live in southern California. (Charles died March 16, 1971). And I could not feel any closer to them than if they had been my natural brothers. In fact, possibly, I have even some deeper feelings because they weren't actually real brothers. I am quite a number of years older to them than if they had been my natural brothers. I am quite a number of years older than both of them, and as youngsters, they would do things for me easier than they would, sometimes, for my parents. And I think that happens sometimes when you happen to be the oldest of a group. I told you that I was born in 1910. My brother Duane was born in 1912, my brother Sterling in 1914, and then my sister Martha [Whiddett] in 1918.

My mother was one of a rather large family, eight children. And where she was the oldest and was young when she married (my mother was nineteen years older than I), I have uncles who were two, four, six, eight years older than I. In Gardnerville in those early years, I was very fortunate in that I had these young uncles. I had, as I said, my grandmother for quite a few years, my great-grandmother until she moved to California. This great-grandmother of mine, I didn't know until I was older, was a step great-grandmother. Put there again, the feeling isn't generally or necessarily the relationship. Her first name was Petrea, pronounced by some of the family as Pe-tray-a, and I think that pronunciation is correct. It's a Norwegian

name. And in growing up, I always said that if and when I ever had a little girl, I would name her for my great-grandmother. And I did eventually, and our daughter is Petrea Nelson Hartman.

On my father's side, there were four children who lived to adulthood. There were also four children who died in infancy or as small children. So both families, there were eight, and my father's side of the family, why, my grandmother Martha had died two years before I was born, but I knew my grandfather, Louis Nelson, all my growing up years, and he died after I started high school. As a child, at one time I lived in his home with him and his daughter, my aunt, Magdalena Nelson Gale.

I think children have some real advantages of having a large family. I still remember with great pleasure the holiday family gatherings and can remember more than twenty people sitting down to a holiday dinner. I suppose there were times when there were maybe more than thirty family members plus friends.

Where none of us had a lot of money, and very few of the family at that time were other than of modest means, one thing is sure: we always had a very sufficient amount of the good foods to eat. We had a big garden. My mother, as women did in those days, canned a lot of fruit, saved a lot of the vegetables for winter. And certain years, too, I remember earthenware crocks in the basement with eggs. We had at least one cow, maybe two, so we always had lots of fresh milk and whole cream, homemade butter. Of course, almost everybody had a little flock of chickens. We'd raise some turkeys each year for the holidays. Each spring, as we got older, we'd have several bummer lambs. And as I say, we always had very good food, and even though it sounds possibly bragging, my mother was a very excellent cook. Most of the family members were very good cooks.



I can remember, still, coming home from school and going into the kitchen and smelling the cinnamon rolls and the homemade bread just out of the oven. We would slice the homemade bread and then generously spread the homemade butter and then use a tablespoon and scoop the thick cream off of a pan and maybe add that to the butter. Maybe we'd have some applesauce and then put the cream on top of the applesauce and then sprinkle that with cinnamon or nutmeg. I think that I still feel very much the same way about homemade cinnamon rolls.

I, of course, attended the Gardnerville grammar school. We didn't have a kindergarten, so I started first grade. My first teacher was Miss Mabel Ritchford, whose parents had a hotel in Gardnerville. And this Miss Mabel Ritchford a number of years later became my aunt, married my uncle, Will Nelson. Miss Ritchford was my second grade teacher, also. Then in the third grade I had a cousin, a Miss Juanita Frey, as my teacher. In the fourth grade, my teacher was Miss Grace Harris from Reno. Miss Grace Harris made such an impression upon me in that grade year that I then decided that I wanted to be a teacher when I grew up. And I never changed all the way through school, even though I might have times where—well, if I'm not going to be a teacher, I would like to be this; or if I shouldn't be able to be a teacher, I might do that. But teaching and to be a teacher was apparently my first love way back then. And I did graduate from the University of Nevada in education, and then was a teacher for the next eleven years.

Miss Harris (again, the idea, when looking back at it now, I know it was rewards for "conduct, attitude, and behavior") would read to the class on Friday afternoon. And one of the books that I still remember, although I don't know the author (I did at one time, but

now I forget), was *The Secret Garden*. And she played the violin. I couldn't tell you whether she was excellent on the violin or very good or maybe she was an amateur with the violin. But to me, it was absolutely beautiful, and I've never forgotten it.

She was one of many teachers who were important to me in my lifetime. I only knew her that year of the fourth grade. I couldn't tell you, except that in later years, I learned that she married an engineer by the name of Hibdon, and then died in childbirth. And I remember that I was very, very grieved when I learned that information. I couldn't say now if it was when I was still living in Carson Valley. I think it was. I think it was maybe not very many years after she left the valley, but that was where my profession was determined, in the fourth grade.

I attended the Douglas County High School. And at Douglas County High School, I had another teacher, Mrs. Charlotte Jepsen, who, talking to her just before school was to start (my freshman year of high school), told me that I should take typing because it was a skill that almost everyone would use at one time or another, and especially when I went to the University, I would be glad that I could type because of themes. I did take typing from her for two years. And then, except for an occasional theme, I never used the typewriter again until the fall of 1942. I was employed that year to be a teacher of government at the Churchill County High School. And a day or two before school was to open, why, the commercial teacher, who had been employed for that school year, notified the principal, Mr. Walter V. Johnson, that she was canceling the contract. C0 Walter came to our house and told me that, starting Monday, I was the typing teacher of the Churchill [laughing] High School. So, there again, we never do necessarily know just when or how or why.

(But I did teach typing, beginning and advanced, in the Churchill County High School for three years, taught it in the evening to adults in the community, thoroughly enjoyed it, actually really learned how to type [laughing]. [I] had a number of youngsters that went on to business colleges and into the business field that did perform beautifully, and it probably shows one of two things: I did do a creditable job with the teaching or they had so much ability that they excelled in spite of me, or as well as, maybe, because of me.)

At the Douglas County High School, I also had a history teacher, a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, Ruthmarion Stewart, who married my uncle, the dentist, Dr. Louis Nelson. Again, because of her excellence in the classroom, my wanting to teach was reinforced. And I think if I hadn't always wanted to from the fourth grade on, why, I would've wanted to after being in her history classes. And there were other teachers in the high school, too. There was a Miss Audrey Springmeyer, who was a girl from Carson Valley and came to Douglas County High School right out of the University. And she, even though I didn't have any classes from her or anything, was one who, by her friendliness and her sincerity, made an impression on the students. And I remember her with real fondness.

I always liked going to school. Most of the time, I couldn't wait to get to school. I didn't ever excel in school. I was a good student, possibly because my mother encouraged us to do well. But other than yell leader for the basketball teams at Douglas County High School and playing some tennis, I really didn't participate in much of the extracurricular activities.

In thinking back to those days and trying to understand it myself, I realize it was because I had other home interests, where

youngsters today go home for TV, and what not. I went home because I had chickens, I had bantams, I had a dog, and I had cats, we had cows that had to be milked, and milk that had to be delivered. In winter months, we had trap lines, and we trapped muskrats. Occasionally we'd catch a mink, and occasionally we'd catch a skunk, and one winter we even tried for coyotes. I learned something from trapping coyotes, that coyotes are smarter than teenagers [laughing]. We didn't catch any. They would spring the traps and take the bait, but we didn't catch any.

From those early years, I have had all of my life a love for animals. I happen to like cats as much as dogs, and dogs as much as cats, but I like bantam chickens as much as dogs and cats. I have had ducks, and I remember on several occasions when we lived in the Hawkins addition, which was just a long block from Douglas County High School, that my three pet ducks that I had at the time would follow me to school in the little irrigation ditch that ran along the not paved streets, and I would discover when I got to the front of the school that here were the ducks. Sometimes I'd have time to take them back home, and sometimes I'd have to go on over to school, telephone my mother to tell her where they were, and she'd have to come and herd them home.

I have raised some wild game at different times. I've raised Chinese pheasants, I raised a few chukkar. In fact, I raised a few chukkar in Churchill County before the bird ever became popular in this state for hunters. I have a friend in Home Gardens now who has pigeons and bantams, and I have several of the bantams that I call "mine."

I think that children are very fortunate if they are raised in areas like Carson Valley, with the beautiful mountains and magnificent Job's Peak off in the distance, and Genoa over

on the west side of the mountains, and the Pine Nut hills to the east, and Woodfords Canyon, and Hope Valley to the south. We grew up with a love for fishing, for horseback riding, for hiking. We taught ourselves to swim in irrigation ditches and in the slough. I still recall with much pleasure that after the evening meal and the chores were all finished, that our mother would let us go outside to play with the neighborhood girls and boys such games as “duck on the rock,” “hide and go seek.” And I don’t know if we did antagonize people at that time; we apparently were not barred from going through other people’s yards or getting in their back yard or hiding in their garage. We all played together and were friends.

After we learned to swim in the irrigation ditches, why, then we swam in the slough, and then as we got older, we swam in the river. We had a lot of fun, and we had good times, and I think today all that would be referred to as “very wholesome living.” Of course, at the time, you take everything for granted; that’s the way things are. But I’m grateful that I grew up in Carson Valley. I am grateful for the friendships that were formed in those years. And I still go out to Carson Valley, not only because I still have relatives there, but I still like to go out to see and be in the valley.

I did complete the junior year at Douglas County High School, and then my parents moved to Reno. So in September of 1927, I joined the family in Reno. I had worked at my uncle’s ranch in Smith Valley for the summer. So my senior year was spent at Reno High School, and I graduated in June, 1928. It was an especially interesting year for me, a “hick from the sticks” from a small school to a rather large high school. But I think it did help me when I went on to the University.

Also, I had two teachers during that senior year who did influence me. One was Dr. Effie

Mona Mack, and the other was Ruth Ferris. And, of course, everyone knows that Dr. Effie Mona Mack was history. Not everyone might know that Ruth Ferris taught senior English, but she did, and terribly well. And both teachers challenged me for good grades ‘cause you just couldn’t do less than the best of what you were capable for either of them. That senior English really did help me when I got to the University and had to start writing themes, doing a lot more reading than we were used to doing, except for just reading for fun.

The fall of 1928, I registered at the University of Nevada. And if you check my transcript, you’ll find that my first year left much to be desired. They used a grade at that time called a WO. That was the “failure due to cuts.” And I had a number of them. I even repeated, I believe, a history course or political science course, as well as several others. But I would say this: I started out having a lot more interest in the social life of the campus than [laughing] I did any academic program. I pledged a fraternity, and I was a frequent guest in the several sorority houses. And I had a lot of fun that year, and I did go to a lot of dances. But [as] I say, academically, I left quite a bit to be desired. And I remember my mother having to come with me to the University, and we had a little conference with the president, and I was reinstated. I never was suspended or anything, but we had a little talk before I started my sophomore year. But anyway, I was able to graduate with my class in 1932. And I did, I think—well, I know I did make the honor roll the last semester. And I did, as I said earlier, graduate with a major in history and minors in Spanish and education. Again, I wasn’t too active in the extracurricular activities at the college level, but I worked a good part of the time while going to college.

To go back to my parents' moving to Reno, I know that the major reason for the move was my mother's insistence that we move to Reno because she felt so strongly about college for her children. And I'm sure that she knew that if we stayed in Gardnerville with the economy as it was that we might not go to college, and that if we moved to Reno, living in a college community, it would probably be easier for us to get a college education. Of course, we didn't go to Reno with any money, and didn't have any money. we were able to buy a home with a rather small down payment, and then a monthly payment of fifty-five dollars. To make the house payment and to keep the home proved to be very difficult. My years in college were all Depression years, although I don't remember that I felt it as much myself as I'd heard others talk about it since. But I think it was because so few of us had anything of the material that it wasn't too noticeable. Very, very, very few of the people that I was friendly with on the campus had a car. Some of them, as my brother and I, had the occasional use of the family car. Oh, I remember some who had a car, but not many had their own car. And we did lots of things by walking to and walking from. Of course, fraternity dues at that time were several dollars a month. And I can remember, though, at times it was difficult to get those few dollars together.

We had, oh, pretty much to make our own entertainment. We had fraternity house dances, and we went to other fraternities. I remember that each fraternity would ask a couple of the fellows from the other houses to attend. So, along with the dances or parties at your own house, why, if you were lucky, you got invited to other houses to their social events. And then, if you were going with a girl who was a sorority member, you got to go to their spring formal. They were the big dress up occasions of the year; you did rent a tux, and

you did send your date a corsage. Oh, there were formal dance programs, and there were gifts, and they were very special. But nothing at all like today; coming up here to talk with you for a little while, I couldn't find a parking place [laughing].

The Depression, of course, did affect all families, some much more than others. I told you in Gardnerville, we always had the best of food because we raised so much food. Of course, on a little lot here in Reno, we couldn't have a big garden; there wasn't the space for it. We did have a few chickens. We did have a few rabbits. You picked up odd jobs here and there, and, of course, you always tried for summer employment, although there were lots of times that summer employment was very limited. Or maybe you worked only a few weeks of the entire summer. Of course, you didn't earn very much money that you could save for when school did start.

I remember my first Homecoming back to the University. The dance was held at the Century Club, and they had door prizes. And I remember I had a lucky number, and when I went up on the little stage there at the Century Club, why, they gave me a sack of potatoes donated by the Dangberg Land and Livestock Company. And I assure you that my mother was far more pleased with that sack of potatoes from the Dangberg ranch in Carson Valley than she would have been had I won a mink stole.

(Not philosophizing in that sense, but I suppose that those Depression years did teach us who were growing up at that time the value of a dollar so very much more than what the youngsters have today, with our inflation and our present economy. And then these years I was in the Probation Department, a lot of youngsters would turn down jobs that we would obtain for them through the department because they didn't pay enough. I

can remember one youngster that begged me to help him get a job, and when I did, it was to start at \$1.87 1/2 an hour, and he wouldn't take it. I remember then crossing his name off the employment list, and I thought, "Well, then, young man, you may find your own." I remember youngsters who were court wards to me who were earning more money on construction jobs than I was earning as the chief probation officer in Washoe County after all my years of working.)

In Carson Valley, not too many families felt the Depression as town people did because, there again, they had their vegetables and their milk and their home-canned fruits and their poultry, so their eating habits didn't have to change too much. They might not have had the same amount of money for clothes, they probably didn't have the social activities, they probably didn't do very much in traveling, but they lived well.

The people in town or cities who lost jobs really had a difficult time because, at that time also, not many women worked. They were still the homemakers. If the source of income was terminated, these families had a very, very difficult time to manage, or even just to eat. And—well, there just wasn't employment opportunity in the state.

While attending the University of Nevada, I had the good fortune to take classes from Dr. (Charles Roger) Hicks. I remember, in particular, his courses on the history of Japan. I remember how he really challenged me to read about the different dynasties. I wouldn't want to take a test on it now, but at the time I was quite well informed on Japanese history. I still would like to someday go to Japan.

I had classes from Dr. [Jeanne Elizabeth] Wier, from Dr. [C. C.] Smith, and Dr. [Silas] Feemster, all of them very interesting people, all of whom were people of character who would be an example to students of that age.

Dr. Wier had taught so very many years, and she still knew more history than—or forgot more history than most of us would ever know. She would occasionally get a little confused, and at the time it might have amused some of us a little bit. In looking back at it, why, I would certainly regret my amusement. I think, though, that none of us certainly ever showed any disrespect in any way whatsoever. And again, where it was my major, and I did feel that I had a very good historical—or a knowledge of history by the time I graduated, it was because of their good understanding and putting up with the silliness of college students.

Dr. Smith was a very kind, soft-spoken, mild-mannered man who took his history very, very seriously. And because he did, ii did. And I liked his classes.

Dr. Feemster was (and I guess you'd put quotes around the word) [a] "character." There was no question of his knowledge of ancient history and his brilliance in the history field, but because of a rather eccentric personality—. I can remember going to class, and several days in a row, why, he wouldn't talk about anything except his milk goats. He milked them himself, and he spent a lot of time with his goats. And when you did go to his class, why, you tried to get a seat near a window. And I don't mean that, now, as any disrespect whatsoever, but I say, he was eccentric. I think he also had a large number of children as well as a large number of goats, and he might've even needed those goats to help with his family, because (those) certainly were Depression times.

I don't think I could help but feel that way 'cause he was a very kind person. r say, the three of us [who had a fit of giggles] deserved to be thrown out on our ear that day, but we weren't, We really deserved to be, it was so childish.



Of course, while I was at the University, as classmates, I went to classes, or at least to school with Tank Smith, who was later one of the mayors of the city of Reno. I went to school with Roy and Bob Bankofier, and Roy is now mayor of the city of Reno. In our class, Margaret Fuller received the gold medal. She is now Margaret Muth, teaching at Reno High School. I was in school with Neil Scott, who became chairman of the Probation Committee in 1949, and with whom I worked all my twenty years in the Probation Department, and with whom I'm now associated in my present position as a consultant with the Washoe County School District. Neil and his wife, Neva (she was Neva Scott), and my wife, the four of us, are all good friends and have been for many years. "Scotty" was very fast on his feet. And I can't tell you now which track record he held, but I know that he held a track record for many, many years. He's been an educator for more years than I. He's— well, it's difficult when you talk about people that you feel that closely to. I don't know a finer man than Neil Scott. And it's an honor to me when I say that I'm a good friend of his.

There were many in school in those days that are still in the state of Nevada in one profession or another. And most of them have been very successful in their particular field. In the fraternity that I belonged to, Joe Jackson was a member. He graduated in journalism. He has been with the Reno Evening Gazette for many years, and the last four years, my son James has had a desk in the news room of the Reno Evening Gazette as sports editor.

Helen Steinmiller Parsons was at the University. She and I are still friends today. They're so many that I was friends with in college that we're still friends today.

I know that the University scene then was a far cry from today. We were a small school.

We all knew each other. There were the same things then that exist now between sororities and fraternities and independents, but in an altogether different way, I would imagine. Of course, we didn't have any of the issues then that we have today. I would have to say that I think we have many problems today that were much larger than any we had then, like pollution, conservation, civil rights, the race problem.

I can recall that when I attended the University, there were very few students here from foreign countries. I remember because of my love for history that I did make a special point at meeting these students from "other lands," as we said then. And we did have a small club on campus at the time where we hoped that these foreign students would feel welcome and a part of the campus. Most of them did belong, but I say, there were just a few. This Cosmopolitan Club did play a small role, but an important role, of campus life. I can't even guess as to the numbers, but I suppose maybe there were six or eight foreign students on the campus at any one time then.

I did some graduate work soon after graduation at the University of California at Berkeley, and because of that same interest, I lived at the international House on the Berkeley campus. I met two students from the Union of South Africa who had from Africa gone to England, and who were then in this country for graduate work. I remember how they spoke English so beautifully and so perfectly, and made me quite self-conscious of my use of slang and (laughing) my use of the English language. I remember from International House the very, very charming young ladies from Japan, from India in their colorful sarongs. There were, of course, quite a number of foreign students on the Cal campus at that time.

I think most of the foreign students who—well, either on the Nevada or the Berkeley campus were young people who had excelled in a particular field in their own country and came here for further instruction so that they could go back and help others, generally through the teaching profession. Most of them were in teaching, some in agriculture, all of them very interesting, and, of course, I always learned much more from them than they learned from me.

In talking about some of the personalities and friends, both in Carson Valley and then while on the campus, I neglected to mention Stanley Johnson, who today is a very successful farmer in the area of Malin, Oregon, and whose sister, Juanita Johnson, now lives in that area, too, with her husband, who is a retired Army officer. Stan's parents lived in that area, too. Mr. Charles Johnson has since died.

Stan (we were in the same class) was really the athletic hero to me in Douglas County. He was the first person that I knew well who took the directive of a teacher one hundred percent to heart in doing just as he was told to do, and when the coach said, "We will now start training for the basketball season," to Stan, that was the word. And he never violated training—never, of course, in act, but never even in thought.

He came to the University of Nevada, and his parents lived here then, too—or his mother, for a while, made a home for her family while they could go to the University here. Stan's participation in athletics, again, was with the same kind of fine—. I'm struggling for a word. I guess [laughing] you could use the word dedication. And where he didn't stay to graduate, why, he certainly was one of the better young people on the campus during those years, a hard worker, and just—. I couldn't say anything too much

as to his integrity and outstanding show of sportsmanship. Well, he showed it in his whole life. I've always wished Stan might have taken up coaching because he's the kind of person that I would like to see in the coaching field, who, when they talk about sportsmanship, knew of which they speak, and it really had deep meaning.

When I graduated in 1932, we were still in the Depression. Jobs were still very, very scarce, and a teaching position was—well, the positions were very few and far between. I didn't have a school before graduating, as a lot of students do today. And we got into the summer, and I heard that there was a vacancy in the Minden grammar school. So I went out to Carson Valley to talk to the school board members and applied. At that time, the Minden grammar school had what they called a "departmental system." I was offered a contract several weeks later, and I did sign to teach in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades; social studies in the upper grades and history in the lower.

Just before getting the offer to teach in the Minden grammar school, my father came home from work one evening very much excited because he knew of a job for me. It was right across the street, and I could live at home, and I could save some money, and I would like it. It was to be a janitor at the Orvis Ring School. And the pay was good. It was a hundred and twenty-five dollars a month. I signed the contract to teach in the Minden grammar school for ninety dollars a month. I don't think that my father ever did really understand why I would take the school and go back, as he said, to Minden, when I could work right across the street for more money. In all fairness, I think, too, it was because I had also said that there were some other courses at the University that I would like to take, and he felt that I could do that as well. But anyway, I went into teaching.

I taught two years at the Minden grammar school. The third year the school board offered me the principalship, saying that Mr. William Howard, the principal, was going to Europe. They didn't, however, tell me that they had given him a leave of absence and that he would return to the Minden grammar school after his year in Europe. But they did tell me that they wanted me to be the principal. And there were a number of people in the community that thought I was too young for the position. Mr. Hans Jepsen, who was the county treasurer at the time, told me at the end of the school year that he was one who had felt that I was too young, but I had certainly changed his mind by my businesslike handling of the school finances, and that I had done a very creditable job.

Then I learned that Mr. William Howard was to return as principal in September and that I was to go back to being a classroom teacher only, I evidenced much less maturity than I probably thought I had at the time by saying, "No, I worked hard to be very successful as the principal, thinking that I would continue to be the principal, and you didn't tell me that Mr. Howard was on a leave, and so I will resign and look for another position." And I did do that.

There still weren't very many teaching positions available in the state, and I ended up by signing a contract to be a sixth grade teacher in Lovelock. So my fourth year of teaching was there. And because I was a new teacher in their system that year, when school opened, a lot of youngsters that none of the other teachers especially wanted in their classes all became sixth graders. And I had twice as many youngsters in the room as seats, half as many books to go around. All in all, to make a long story short, why, where I thoroughly enjoyed the children and that part of it, it wasn't a very happy year. I was

not offered a contract for the next year, and I did not teach at all the next year.

I returned to Reno and I worked for J. C. Penney's as a clerk. I worked at Herd and Short's, which was a haberdashery on Virginia Street (I guess they don't use that word any more, but anyway, it was a very nice men's clothing store on North Virginia). Then in the spring of 1937, I was very fortunate and was appointed an attache for the 1937 session of the legislature. I was what they called then a "minutes clerk". You typed the minutes. This was in the assembly. And you typed those minutes without errors. So there again, my typing came back into the picture.

After a couple weeks of the session had gone on, why, one of the assemblymen happened to mention to me that I was entitled to an assistant, and he handed me a list of names of six or eight young women. As I read on down the list, I saw the name Alice Heise. I told him that I had known her as a little girl and knew the family, and I hoped that she might want the position.

Well, she did come to work with me in that office at the legislature. And to show you that the relationship was a good one, why, we were married in May. I guess after thirty-three years now, why, you can say that marriages can hold together, even on a short [laughing] going together. It wasn't a short engagement because I didn't have the money to buy an engagement ring. We were married for some time before I bought one.

on May the twelfth, 1937, my wife and I were married here in Reno, Nevada, and then went to Zephyr Cove, Lake Tahoe, where I had employment as the manager for Mr. Charles Wiley, working at his store at Zephyr Cove. After I married, my wages had a bit of a boost. It was board and room and sixty-five dollars a month, with the idea that when they were especially busy, Alice would help at the



fountain, which she did do. We had very good food. But the sixty-five dollars didn't go very far because I had purchased a new car just before that, and I was making a fifty-dollar monthly car payment [laughing]. So the early months of our marriage, where most of the hours were taken up in work; why, when there was free time, we had to spend it pretty much on the lake shore where it didn't cost money.

Anyway, that summer, I also came to the University campus several times for interviews for a September teaching position, and on one of the trips, I met and talked with the superintendent of the Ely grammar school, a Mr. [W. J.] Clarke. He was quite encouraging to me. He was interested in a man to teach eighth grade subjects Primarily, but also someone that could act as the principal and give him some assistance with the work. so, anyway, about the middle of August, I did get a telegram from Mr. Clarke from Ely, that the board had, even without the personal interview, accepted his recommendations and had approved me for that position. So, the end of August— or, anyway, ahead of Labor Day, Alice and I drove to Ely.

I did teach in Ely, then, for the next two years, and I had an eighth grade home room. The first semester that I was there, why, they had the boys and girls separated in different home rooms. Because the year before there had been a considerable number of problems with discipline, and the man that I had replaced had actually been run out of the job, and I had no intention of not keeping my position in Ely, newly married and jobs very scarce, I found it to be one of the most interesting periods of all of my life.

Ely was a very, very fine place at that time for teachers. The community was very much interested in their schools, the parents were very much interested in becoming acquainted with their teachers. They were very anxious

to see that the teachers liked Ely. And that was at all grade levels. They were very kind in extending dinner invitations and invitations for bridge (bridge was very popular at that time). Alice and I quite often would have to beg off on a Sunday, just to really have a little free time for ourselves.

The school did have a lot of rambunctious youngsters that did immediately test the new teachers. But the morning of the day that school started, I had been in my classroom for a while, getting things ready, and then downstairs. While downstairs, the bell rang, and the youngsters trooped into the building and into their classrooms. I walked back up the stairs, and as I entered the door to this eighth grade home room (none of the children had I met previously, or knew), I heard this rather deep, gruff voice from the back of the room say as I went through the door, "Here's that old son of a bitch now!"

so, being young and a bit impulsive, I sought out the voice in the back of the room. I asked him to come with me, and he refused. So I took hold of his arm. The desks were on runners, and there was three desks fastened together. He fastened his feet around the desk in front of him and held on. He was taller than I, but he wasn't stronger than I. So, with a little encouragement on my part, of kicking at his feet and grabbing at his arms, I finally dislodged him therefrom, and ended up with his feet under my left arm and his head on the floor. We took a considerable amount of time going to the front of the room because he grabbed onto each desk as we went by, and there wasn't much walking space. And then across the front of the room to the door, it was still that rather slow process. Come of the youngsters had chosen sides by that time, and some of them were cheering for him (most of them were), hut a few timid souls were cheering for me.

So we got out in the hallway and had to go down several flights of stairs to Mr. Clarke's office. We finally made his office, and if Mr. Clarke hadn't heard us arriving, why, he did know when we hit the door of his outer office. He was standing just inside the door, and he said, "Mr. Nelson, you will proceed with this student to the basement."

Well, I hadn't even been to the basement. But anyway, he either told me where or led the way. I think he led the way then. So we went down to the basement, which was the gym floor, where the youngsters could shoot baskets, and what not. Anyway, as we got down there, why, he told me to drop the young man whose legs I was still holding. I did. Then Mr. Clarke asked him to please stand up, which he did. Then Mr. Clarke decked him. When he got up the second time, why, Mr. Clarke decked him again. The boy arises after that, and Mr. Clarke turns to me, and he said, "Now, you deck him," which I did.

I've never had any particular experience in fighting. I am not a fighter. I didn't know, of course, by that time, what it was going to be. But anyway, as he got up after the third fall, why, Mr. Clarke proceeded to explain to him that I had been employed by the school district to teach in that grade, and that I had every intention of handling the room, and he'd just better make up his mind right about now.

The boy did consent to certain procedures, and we walked together back up the stairs and into the room. He sat down at his desk, and I stopped by my desk in the front of the room and told the class that I regretted the interruption, but we would now belatedly have the pledge of allegiance to the flag (which might be old-fashioned now, but practically all did it then, and I still like it; if I were teaching, I'd still do it). So we saluted the flag, sat down. Oh, I had my name on the blackboard, but I talked to them a little bit about my background

and hoped that we would have a fine year, and explained to them that I was there to be of assistance to them. And we went from there to one of the first classes.

The young man who gave me the rather informal greeting became one of my good friends in the school. In the second semester there, why, he was the assistant playground director, and had the ability and the maturity to do it without almost no supervision on my part. The same young man eventually enlisted for the Korean conflict, was killed in Korea.

There were several occasions during that first year where a couple other teachers and I did paddle some of the youngsters for misconduct. (They referred to seventh and eighth graders as the "big youngsters," or the "older youngsters" in that school.) They didn't have recess as the other youngsters did. It had been the policy, too, that midmorning and midafternoon, you had to take your home room to the lavatory in the basement.

At that time Tarzan films were very popular, and if I was at the head of the line, why, one of my boys was Tarzan at the rear of the line, or maybe there were two Tarzans that day, and they gave the Tarzan cry, which didn't make me a bit popular with the teachers in that immediate vicinity. Of course, I tried changing positions, but like I say, if I was at the front, why, it came from the back; if I was at the back, it came from the front. If I was at the middle, it could come from both ends. So I couldn't win for losing. So going back to the home room this one day (these were just the boys out of my home room; I had boys and girls both), I told these boys that if they did it again that I would use the paddle on all of them. And that was when I learned a very good lesson that I've used ever since. Never tell children you're going to do something if you don't fully intend to do it, because I had, I'm sure, at the time I said it,

no intention in the world of paddling them at all. But, of course, the very next day when came the recess break, why, there was a Tarzan call. They were testing me, to see whether I would or wouldn't.

So I would, and I did, and a couple of the parents in the community came to tell me that they heartily approved, and I had their permission to do it any time that I wanted. Another teacher in another school in the community came by a number of days later after school. When he came into the room and introduced himself, why, then, he congratulated me and told me that his son was one of my students, that it was the first time he'd ever had a paddle touch his anatomy, that the boy's mother wouldn't allow it, and that I was probably going to have some difficulty with the mother before it was all over, but he wanted to first offer his congratulations and to tell me that it was the best thing that had happened to his son in almost— well, of seven and a half years of public education. Of course, as you and I both know today, why, you totally refrain from that kind of discipline. But we're talking about 1937, not the later years.

I'm not one bit proud that I did use a paddle, but those youngsters had run out my predecessor. The man was very, very capable, I was told, a young man, a graduate from Stanford University, and a master's degree. But two other men teachers in the school and myself, all three of us, we did paddle on occasion. But before the school year was over, why, we had stopped, and none of us had to use paddles again while we were there. But they were youngsters that intended to push the teacher just as far as they could, and they had in the past, and wanted to see what they could get by with.

But as I said a little earlier, too, the community (and this held true, also, in Ruth

and McGill and Kimberly), all of the teachers in that area really liked teaching in White Pine County because of the tremendous cooperation on the part of the children. A lot of those youngsters had first generation parents, most of whom had been born in a foreign country. An awful lot of them were Kennecott employees or railway employees (but most of them, of course, worked for the mine in one capacity or another), and they were anxious for their children to have advantages that they had not had. In other words, they wanted them to have an education, and they were doing everything to encourage an education for their children. There was something very, very special about those people because, almost without exception, those youngsters did go on to high school, and they did graduate from high school. A very large percentage for a little community like that did go on to college, and quite a number into the teaching profession. Quite a few started their teaching career in coaching. Just one example locally, Mr. Deloy Anderson, who heads the personnel department for the Washoe County School District, was in my classes in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. The superintendent of the Lyon County Schools was one of my students. But several are working with the space program in very, very fine positions, youngsters who excelled in mathematics and who excelled later on in school in physics and chemistry. And a number of them are in top positions with the federal government, as well as state government.

There's a young lady, I believe, from McGill who now is the head of the Maritime Commission. She was not one of my students, but she's a White Pine girl. Justice Jon Collins is an Ely native. Mr. A. Todd Davis, who, before his death, was working in public relations with Kennecott Copper, started his

career after graduation as a teacher in the Ely grammar school and then became the principal for Ruth elementary school. Mr. Davis was an exceptionally fine man in the teaching profession. Well, he would've been an especially fine man in any profession that he chose. He was a wonderful man.

The principal of the White Pine County High School was Mr. Davis, another Mr. Davis, Mr. Chester Davis. One of his instructors was Mr. Glenn Duncan in the English department, who later became the superintendent of schools for the state of Nevada, and a very fine superintendent of schools. Mr. Chester Davis was an excellent principal in the White Pine Schools, and eventually he was with the NEA (Nevada Education Association) in this area.

At that time, with the Ely elementary school faculty, there was Juanita Elcano, who, for many years now has taught in the Washoe County School District. Jessie McClure, who is now Jessie Burkitt, she was teaching there, and for a number of years now has had a very fine position with the Sacramento County Schools as a counselor, for many years at the juvenile level, and now she is a counselor in their adult education program. I could go on and on and on with these people who had their beginnings or were White Pine County residents, but all very, very fine young people, just integrity and honesty, and all the good traits of citizenship just to the nth degree. That's the kind of people they were.

The mother & one of the youngsters I had in school owned apartments in Ely. Her name was Mrs. Flora Graves. She had one brick two-story building where she lived and where Mr. Chester Davis had an apartment. She had apartments across the street, oh, possibly a dozen units, and she made it possible for three of the teachers from the grammar school and their wives to live (and my wife and I were one of the couples). Because I did a little yard work

for her and kept the lawn watered in the fall, she gave us a reduction in rent. When she had a vacancy in her large apartment building where there were just four apartments (but they were large apartments), and because her daughter was in my home room and I was giving her some special assistance with art work, which she dearly loved, Mrs. Graves rented the very, very nice upstairs apartment to Alice and me for the sum of thirty-five dollars a month. I'm sure the other tenants were paying seventy-five. But that's just another example of how people treated you there. I most certainly never earned the difference in chores because she was a very busy, hard-working person, and most of the time, she did the work herself. But that's the way they were.

The records would show that after I had taught there two years that I did leave that summer of '39, and worked for my father. (He bought the Waldorf Club at 142 North Virginia Street.) I stayed for one year, and then I went back to Ely and taught two more years. So altogether, I was in the Ely grammar school for four years. I'm repeating myself, but as I said, they were four very happy years, very worthwhile years. So many of those people that were my friends then still are friends today.

Then I went from Ely the next September to the Churchill County High School. Mr. George McCracken had been the superintendent of schools there for many, many years, and upon his resignation, they hired Mr. Walter D. Johnson, who had been teaching in Eureka. He graduated the same year I did, he and his wife both. It was 1932. I was hired by the school board to teach government, United States history, and whatever other subjects they might find it necessary for me to teach.

The day before school started, Mr. Johnson came by to our home and informed me that

their typing teacher had resigned. So he explained to me rather briefly and quickly that I was now the new typing teacher for Churchill County High School.

Well, I hadn't had anything of typing from the time I was a freshman and sophomore at Douglas County High School, and not one of Charlotte Jepsen's best students in the commercial department. But with the first day of school, why, I had classes in beginning typing, classes in advanced typing, and shortly after school started, I had classes in adult typing, economics, and business arithmetic. Mr. Johnson put me in charge of the building in the evening for the evening classes—in other words, to see that the doors were open when the adults in the community came to school, and then also, to see that windows were closed and doors were locked at the end of the classes. So it made it rather a long day, but at the same time, the adult teaching was a very new experience for me. I had not been teaching except in elementary schools, so the high school level was a new experience. I thoroughly enjoyed it. And again, we had wonderful students in the school and a very nice faculty.

The years while I was there, Mrs. Byrd Sawyer (who is the stepmother of our former governor, Grant Sawyer) was the librarian with the Churchill County High School. Hiss Hattie Brown was on the faculty; Miss Ann Gibbs was on the faculty. My wife and I are still very good friends with Ann and her husband, Mr. John Berlin, and we do visit back and forth at each other's homes. Ann is probably one of the better English teachers who has ever taught in the state of Nevada. She had been advisor for the honor society at Churchill County High School all these years. They have a society called the Alpha Lambda, and to the best of my knowledge, it's always been one of the choice groups that any high school student can belong to.

I might say, after talking about discipline the first several semesters at the Ely grammar school, there were no discipline problems at the Churchill County High School, none whatsoever for any of the staff or for the principal. We had some problems in the early war years because there were Japanese students in the school, a small number of them.

I remember one morning when Miss Gibbs and I walked into the study hall, across the blackboards in the front of the room was, "Japanese, go home."

So Miss Gibbs and I took it upon ourselves to put also on the blackboard that Germans go home, the Italians go home, and whatever other names we might have used. And most of us fell into one category or another. And no big deal came out of it.

The Japanese families in Churchill County were not evacuated and sent to camps as they were from the West Coast. Two of the families were well known in this state for many, many years because of the wonderful produce they raised. Of course, they were the Itos and the Kitos. Their youngsters, in turn, were members of the honor society, they were class officers, they were student body officers. They all went on to school. Most of them now live in California. All have responsible positions. I guess, again, it's because of family life, but they were the most respectful youngsters that I ever taught. They couldn't, in any way, be anything but the most courteous and kind to teachers. Their parents were the same way.

You know the reputation Churchill County has for their Fallon cantaloupes. That fall, one of the youngsters told me that their cantaloupes were ready and to come out, that he wanted me to get a couple of cantaloupes. My wife and I did go to the ranch (these two families lived on the same ranch). I met Mr. and Mrs. Ito, and I met Mr. and Mrs. Kito, and



I met younger members of the family. And in their vegetable cellars, why, was all this fresh produce. Of course, instead of going back to town with a couple of the delicious Fallon cantaloupes, why, we had a lug of cantaloupes, we had sweet corn, we had carrots and beets and potatoes, and fresh eggs, couple fryers. They were all gifts. I was not able to pay them anything.

Well, several weeks later when I went back to buy something in the produce line, the ladies, again, were so generous, wanting us to have this and that. And I had said a number of times, "Yes, but today, we are paying."

So When we're all finished and the things are in the car and I take out my wallet, Mrs. Ito says to me, "Twenty cents, please."

So we had [laughing] everything again for twenty cents.

I probably, or my wife, would have gone to their produce farm quite a few times in the next several years, except that we couldn't [laughing].

We would come to Reno, and in downtown shopping, why, Alice would buy a box of candy for the family. Or if we went to San Francisco, why, we'd buy candy, a box of candy or two. I remember once, we got a five-pound box, and the thanks for that, again, were [laughing] almost embarrassing. But it is an example, I think, of the kind of people that have resided in the state of Nevada that I had the good fortune to know and to teach their youngsters.

At the Churchill County High School, along with the adult classes that I had in typing, I also had a group of young men from the Fallon Navy base who were nonreaders. Of course, that was something very foreign to my life experience at that time, a nonreader. Youngsters (I call them youngsters; they were seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, and twenty, and I think I had a couple in their middle twenties), young men who had traveled far

more than I, [laughing] much farther (I hadn't been very far), I learned a great deal more from them than they did from me. They could verbalize, of course, beautifully, and you'd have no idea on meeting and talking with [them] that they couldn't read. And it was only when I, very foolishly the first night, had high school books and English literature texts and some of the classics as books, that I thought I might start with some of them, thinking that it was just their experience in reading that Mr. Johnson had talked to me about. Then on the second time that I had the class, I had primers and first, second, and third grade readers. And I had to teach these young men. Of course, not being able to read, they also didn't write. I guess most of them knew how to write their name. But they couldn't write, and the big thrill was when I helped them to reach a point where they could write a letter like, "Dear Mom, I am in Fallon, Nevada at the Navy base. Most days are sunshine, and the fliers can fly. I like it here. Your loving son."

Well, of course, I had an eye-opener that year in what we mean by the opportunities of education. Of course, some of those young men were very, very bright, and they went from the primer to the readers to— [laughing] we just went just about as fast as time would permit, once they got the basics. Then they were so anxious to learn that when school was over and they'd have (these were night classes) another hour or two before they'd have to report back to the base, why, quite often my wife and I would have them come to the house, and we would continue this education that I said was so beneficial to me, because I learned about all the rest of the world from them.

The [adult education] program was rather limited in the school. Most were taking commercial subjects, and they were

housewives who were hoping to go back to some kind of office employment. Oh, I had a number of teachers, too, taking typing. They had never learned to type, and they wanted the basic fundamentals so that they could type things for their classes, and, I suppose, personal correspondence. I remember one semester I had a number of elementary school teachers from that area. A couple were teachers out in little one-room schools, but some were from the schools right in town, too.

Then, at Churchill County High School, too, the last year I was there I had a class of young people that were [in an] on-the-job training program, and they had part of the school day in community employment. Of course, we had a class in conjunction, and then I supervised this downtown employment along with the employers. That was a very interesting experience and very worthwhile for me, too, after I got into the probation field and had to run an unofficial unemployment office to help these youngsters with jobs.

My father had for several years operated the Waldorf barber shop. when he learned that the lease was not to be renewed for the restaurant and bar part of the operation, he obtained the lease from Mr. Charlie Richards, a local attorney, who owned the building. Dad had the Waldorf from 1940 until the fall of 1948, when his lease was not renewed by Mr. Richards. I worked for him the first year, and then, after teaching at Churchill County High School, I went back and worked for him again from the early summer of 1945. I stayed on in the Waldorf even after he left and worked for the new owners until the spring of 1949.

I had various and sundry duties for my father, but the number one responsibility was to have my work finished so that I could greet people, and at mealtime, seat people, and I could supervise the waiters and the

bartenders. Greeting people was terribly pleasant because most of the people that came in there, I knew. We were not a house for tourists. It was a college hangout because of the cokes, lemonades, and chocolate milks, and, for the older students, the draft beer. And in the cold winter months, why, we had rather a considerable reputation for our Tom and Jerrys and our hot buttered rums, and we did fix batter after batter of Tom and Jerry for people in the community for their own parties at home. We had the downtown business people for their midmorning coffee breaks, midafternoon coffee breaks. And we had our regular customers, too, who came for their before-work shot and their midmorning shot and a drink or two at noon, and their midafternoon shot. Then they came and sat at the bar after work before going home.

We did have the best beef sandwiches, and we did have the best deep friend halibut, and we did have the best half baked chicken and dressing that you could buy anywhere. And even though the prices then and now are so different—. I remember when the hot roast beef sandwiches were twenty-five cents, and the draft beer was ten cents, and the cokes were ten cents— and that was a large coke, and it did have the real coke syrup, and then we did use the real flavors. If it was a fresh lime, we did use fresh limes. And, of course, we did build up a very enviable reputation and did sell more cokes than any place west of the Mississippi. People from all over, and especially salesmen when they were in Reno, did go to the Waldorf because of the food and because of the bar.

After the lunch hour, we would have the young matrons in the community at the Waldorf with their babies in their arms or the pushcarts. And if the child was old enough and the parents allowed, why, the youngster munched on a pretzel, which were in bowls

on all of the tables and were one of the fringe benefits. They were free.

Mackay Day and Mackay weekend was always a very big celebration for the community, and it was always a big celebration for the Waldorf. Monday evening, after fraternity and sorority meetings, many of the students came to the Waldorf for a coke.

This was just after the war years. There was several times when my father was criticized for serving draft beer to students. I don't say that there weren't some under the age of twenty-one that did occasionally have a beer because there'd be a large crowd sitting around in a booth, and they would exchange their drinks, or share drinks. But most of those boys were boys who had served in the war and were going back to school on GI, and were twenty-two, twenty-three, up to twenty-six years old.

But it was a very happy place to be, as far as the associations, but it was an unhappy job for me in that the job didn't require any challenge. Teaching had always been my first love and it was what I wanted to do, except I had to help my father, and wanted to help my father. But it was sort of going back each day most of the time to the same thing, of taking the tapes and the cash from the cash registers, and I did do quite a bit of the purchasing and the general supervision. But most of the time the staff were reliable and dependable. It just wasn't the challenge to me, personally. It was different for my father and a couple other members of the family. But quite possibly, in looking back at it now from this span of time, I suppose there was some resentment on my part that I had to give up my profession to help my father. But he did need me, and in looking backward, I'm very grateful that I did work with him those several years because shortly after he retired, he died.

Dad was very, very well liked by the students and by the townspeople. He was very

generous with the young people, and quite often, without anyone knowing about it, why, he did assist a lot of the students through a college career. And some did repay loans, too. Some—well, in fact, quite a number, it was just out-and-out gifts because there was no attempt to repay various sums of money, and it didn't bother my father. I mean, my father did it because he wanted to and was able to. But he did help a lot of young people stay in school.

Now, I was not involved in any of that part of the operation of the Waldorf. I did the banking, and I handled the money, and I did cash checks. But it was not my business, and [laughing] I didn't get into that part of it.

It was, probably, my best background training for my eventually being a probation officer because (and I think I told you before) during the eleven years of classroom teaching, I lived in the narrow little world of the educator. And being at the Waldorf, I learned a lot of lessons that I needed. I became much more understanding of the person that can't handle their drinks, as well as others. I became much more understanding of the individual who might bring a friend to dinner rather than his wife or another family member. I did have opportunities to talk with lots of former students at the elementary and high school level that were now in college, and that was a pleasant experience most of the time. But sometimes, I really got into counseling sessions [with] young people, who, during their first time away from home, became quite enamored of the glitter of this community, and some of them even gambling money that they, of course, could not afford to gamble. I would say that it was probably my best background experience for having to work with youngsters and people as I did in the probation department.

Also, they taught me, too, this lesson, that just because they cash a check in your establishment, it doesn't mean that they



have money in the bank to cover it. And sometimes, they definitely took advantage of personal friendship to cash checks. By the time my father left the Waldorf there was a big bundle of bad checks that had accumulated, and we were never able to collect.

So from various angles, I had a lot of good instruction. For example, in purchasing, it sounds very simple to order two cases of limes, two cases of oranges, two cases of lemons. I could be in the basement area when the delivery man arrived, and I could see him set down the number of cases as it was listed on the invoice. I probably then had something else to do and went on about my business and didn't realize that maybe one box of limes was waltzed right back to the truck. Or we had three cases of bourbon and three cases of scotch delivered, and I saw them with my own eyes. But when they got in the storage part of the basement, why, there were two cases rather than three, or one case rather than two, or nine rather than ten. And after that happened a few times and things just didn't check out as they were supposed to check, why, they taught me a good lesson, that you checked and you watched 'til things were put away and the padlock was snapped.

Also, you do have individuals that come to you and they want a job, and they've had experience as a waiter, they've had experience as a bartender, and they have experience as a counter man, or they have been cooking for ten years, and you hire, and then you notice that the cash registers are short, or that they are treating lots of drinks which the boss is paying for, but they're gathering up the tips. Then, on the food counter, maybe the young woman standing behind the counter has two gravy pots, one for gravy and one that's just colored, and she drops money into the second gravy container.

I was, I suppose, shocked and amazed and could hardly believe that adults who claimed

to need employment could very quickly start stealing. Of course, one of the reasons that I came to the Waldorf was because of his problems with help. Dad was very kind-hearted and wouldn't question that someone who worked for him could be stealing. I always had to prove it to him several times before he could believe. And then, sometimes, too, he still was willing to give them another chance.

I also learned a lesson then, too, that when you have problems with an employee, one of the best things you can do is just terminate employment right then and there. At least, that was my experience.

With children, it's a different matter. I'm the first one to give a child another chance, a second chance, a third chance, maybe as many as are necessary 'til they get the message. But because of that work, I became much less tolerant of adults, and I'm still that way today. But I wouldn't want that part to discolor anything about the Waldorf. It was a very friendly place for people to go. With or without a dime, you were welcome, from when you came through the front door or left by the back door. And if you wanted to just visit with a friend in a booth and eat pretzels and not order a drink, you were welcome to do so. Of course, gallons of coffee were consumed every day. My wife and I and other family members still mention how much we miss a cherry lime coke or a chocolate vanilla coke. You can't buy cokes like those anywhere. And it's very gratifying for me to meet people that I haven't seen for a long time that went to the Waldorf when they were in college, or were young people in this community and became acquainted with the Waldorf and haven't been in the area for a long time, and they always refer to it as the "good old days." My family and I refer to it, also, as the "good old days." It was, on the whole, really a fun time.



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## SPECIAL ASPECTS OF THE WASHOE COUNTY PROBATION OFFICE

### **BEGINNING THE PROBATION DEPARTMENT: LEGISLATION, THE PROBATION COMMITTEE**

In 1949, state Senator E. Frandsen Loomis from Washoe County introduced Senate Bill No. 41, which I have referred to in many of my talks as the first juvenile court legislation for the state of Nevada. It is an act relating to children, establishing juvenile divisions in the district courts and defining their jurisdiction, powers, and duties, providing for the appointment of juvenile referees and probation committees, probation officers, defining their powers and duties, providing for their compensation, and, of course, repealing all acts in conflict herewith.

As I am somewhat familiar with juvenile court laws in some of the western states, I think that the one Nevada adopted was not only very adequate and very good in its generalities, but also very good in its spelling out details. It made it possible for the judges to act, as it's implied in the law, with the philosophy of the court acting in the best interest of the child. And, of course,

if you look at the bill itself, you'll notice that they use the word "child," meaning a person under eighteen years of age. Even though it spells out which children would be within the jurisdiction, under Section 3, it concerns any child living or found within the county. Well, that Vs just about as general as you can make it.

There has always been an understanding with Nevada counties that, for example, if a youngster from Churchill County or Douglas County or White Pine County were arrested in this county for some offense, that we would always refer the child back to the county of legal residence because, in the first place, it would be difficult to work out a good probation plan for the child here where his parents are there. So we have, in practically all cases—at least, the twenty years while I was in the department—done that. We also had the same relationship with a number of the other western states, primarily California. Then, in later years, California changed their law so that if the child committed an act here, we couldn't just refer the case back to

them, saying that [an] act was committed here, and give them the arrest reports and the particulars, and then they would take the child to court. They can no longer do that. So what we would have to do, then, if the child, say, Committed a burglary here, would be to file the petition, have the child appear in court in our jurisdiction, and then, in the process of the court proceedings, recommend that the matter be returned to the county of legal residence in California, and then request the probation department to supervise this youngster for the state of Nevada. In practically all cases, the probation departments or law enforcement officials have referred the youngsters to the county of their legal residence. And it's always worked very well.

In Nevada, the juvenile courts and the laws for children are all on the county basis. And in Nevada, adult legislation is not on the county level, but on statewide level. Juvenile probation officers are county officers. You serve at the pleasure of the district judges and you may be a juvenile probation officer serving in more than one county. In our department here in Washoe County we were exclusively Washoe County officers.

At the time this legislation was enacted, Judge A. J. Maestretti was the district judge for Washoe County, and he named the first probation committee. Those members named James Santini as the first chairman of the probation committee and Helen Wittenberg as the first secretary. The other three members of the five-man board were Mr. Neil P. Scott, with the Reno schools; Mr. Roy Gomm, who at that time was with the Sparks City Schools; and Mr. Mitch Armanko, one of the leading businessmen in the community. The law states that the judges will appoint five representative citizens of the community.

The committee, then, following the directive of the law, and with the assistance

of a representative of the National Probation and Parole Association (the regional office in San Francisco was contacted), a Mr. Milton Rector came to Reno to work with the committee in setting up the probation department. (They learned that Mr. Milton Rector was a native Nevadan, having been born in Churchill County. Mr. Milton Rector is today the president of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency.) The committee advertised the position of probation officer for Washoe County and accepted applications. (And I might tell you, too, in counties where there's just one probation officer—and there are several in the state of Nevada— you are not, by statute, a chief probation officer until you have one or more assistants. You are the probation officer for the county.)

They received applications from Nevadans and individuals from several of the western states. There was not a written examination, although you did have to write and submit with your application your philosophy of working with children, along with your educational background and your work experience. There were thirty-three written applications received. The committee did the initial screening and then interviewed fifteen of the thirty-three. I was one of the applicants and was recommended by the committee for the position and appointed by the court, and I took office July 1, 1949.

Well, as you already know, I was a public school teacher in Nevada for eleven years. Also, you know that I left the profession a couple different times to assist my father in his business, the Waldorf Club in Reno. My wife and I had purchased a home in Reno, and our youngsters were getting roots down, so to speak. And my wife very much liked living in Reno, was close to her parents, who live in Minden. And—well, Alice has always loved Reno. When my dad no longer had the

lease for the Waldorf (and I worked there only a short time with the new owner), it was necessary for me to find a job. I wanted to go back to the teaching profession. With Alice not wanting to leave Reno, and at that time, there weren't large numbers of vacancies here in the Washoe County schools, and there was a larger number of applicants interested in the social studies and history and government than almost any other subject, it didn't look necessarily encouraging, except that I was told by the superintendent that he would be happy to have me on their list for substitute teachers until there would be a vacancy.

well, with a wife and children, you need [laughing] something a little more positive than that. So I applied in several California communities and was giving very serious thought to accepting a junior high school position in Santa Barbara, California, when the ad appeared in the paper for the probation officer position. Though I knew practically nothing whatsoever at all [laughing] about a probation department or anything about the position, or that I even might be interested, because—. And I won't say that Alice was the only one who wanted to stay in Reno. I'm sure that I probably wasn't too anxious to leave at the time, either, although I like Nevada's small towns much better than my wife does.

So I did talk to both Mr. Santini and Mrs. Wittenberg about applying, and they were very good to explain what the job would involve, and it seemed like a real challenge to me and an opportunity to really do something for children. And I, as I said, submitted an application and had the interview, and then I think it was a couple or three weeks later, they made it their decision and notified me that I did receive the position.

So then I met with Mr. Santini and the members of his committee, and they explained to me that they had arranged with

Mrs. Kay Kunkel, the chief probation officer in San Joaquin County in Stockton, for a two-week indoctrination period so that I could become a bit familiar with juvenile court proceedings.

I did go to Stockton, and Mrs. Kay Kunkel was the first probation officer [laughing] I ever had conversation with, and a very, very vivacious, charming, lovely lady, with all kinds of ability with court matters, made the two weeks very interesting and very informative for me. I'm happy to be able to tell you that after two weeks I did come back to Reno not one hundred percent, at least, a greenhorn. And I did know that a legal document to bring a child to court was called a petition.

It was a very good thing that I did have that two-week period to learn something, because when I got back to Reno at the middle of the month, why, I was amazed to learn that the secretary in the probation department had scheduled a court hearing for me for my very first day back in the office. And, of course, I was not only not acquainted with the child or the parents or the reason for the arrest or arrests, whatever it was, or whatever kind of planning might be necessary for the child, but I did learn in going to talk to the judge that a police officer was recommending very strongly that this youngster be sent to the boys' industrial school in Elko to get him out of the community because he was—oh, I don't know how—I don't want to say it unfairly, but apparently, it had reached a proportion that everyone wanted him out of the community to take the pressures off of each other. And, of course, I had just learned that you never appeared with a child in court unless you were completely familiar with all the circumstances of the case. But when I mentioned to the judge that I would prefer a postponement to give me a chance to get acquainted with the case, why, he informed me that the hearing would be

held at two p.m. as scheduled. So I did appear at two p.m. as scheduled, and a police officer did present the case, and the judge did make the order, and the boy was committed to the Nevada School of Industry. And I was sitting there pretty much as an embarrassed bump on a log. Well, that was my first case [laughing].

I had an opportunity to meet with the committee and explain to them the necessity of my having a little time to get acquainted with the situation. I guess I was really asking for them to intercede for me with the judge, because I learned, too, that there were some other cases scheduled. And where I didn't know just exactly how it was accomplished, I was given a grace period, and I didn't appear in court with another child for a number of days.

I would want to say at this point, too, that I was involved with arrested children for a period of time, maybe even as long as a year, where many in law enforcement and even the court and others felt that because I was still very inexperienced and they had been working in the county with children for a longer period of time, that they knew more about it than I did, and [felt], shall we say, that my recommendations didn't necessarily carry too much weight. Also, there were youngsters committed, which action was totally opposed to my recommendations because, as you know, probation is a period giving the child (as well as adult) an opportunity to do things differently and prevent institutionalization. Taking a child to court the very first time and committing him certainly wasn't in keeping with the intent of the law at all. You really didn't need a probation department for that. If you were going to arrest and commit, why, all you needed was the police and the judge and someone, then, to see that the boy got on a bus or delivered him to the school. But by degrees, I was able to—I guess

about the best word is I was able to “sell” the philosophy of the probation department of being of assistance to the child, the court being of assistance to the child, and that in the community all the agencies should work together and with the schools. I think the goals are all very similar. Everything is pretty much geared to be of assistance to the child. This, with the probation department, wasn't anything unique. But fortunately, and thanks to many good-thinking people, we were able to get that philosophy established, and I'm happy to say that that philosophy remained with the department pretty much intact for the twenty years that I served.

The [probation] committee members are appointed for different periods of time, and then they must be reappointed or new members named in their place. The original committee named did serve until Mr. James Santini resigned. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Santini died, and the judges named Mr. Bruce Bowen, a Reno attorney, to the committee. Then the committee named Mr. Neil Scott as chairman, and Mr. Scott served as chairman until he resigned recently. Helen [Wittenberg] served as the secretary of the probation committee until her unexpected death. Then Mrs. Barbara Vucanovich was named to replace Helen, and the committee selected her as their secretary. Of course, Mrs. Vucanovich served until she resigned. Mr. Roy Gomm served from his original appointment until his death. Helen died May the twenty-first, 1966, and Roy Gomm died June the nineteenth, 1966.

Well, while we are talking about the committee, I think I should mention, too, that anyone doing research would learn reading Senate Bill 41 that the legislature, in the juvenile court law, very specifically stated that children were not to be held in jail, and they granted authority for the county to



provide and furnish and maintain at public expense a building suitable and adequate for the purpose of a detention home (that's the temporary holding of children). Then it specifically provided that in counties of over 20,000 in population (and Washoe County in 1949 did have more than 20,000), the county commissioners of said counties are directed to provide the said detention facilities as aforesaid within two years after the passage of this act. So Washoe County should have built and should have been maintaining a detention home in 1951. And as you know, we did not open a detention home for children until February 27, 1961, or ten years after the date proposed by the legislature.

But I got sidetracked again, which I do so easily. To get back to original Senate Bill 41, it so positively, definitely stated—and it was a statute—that the county commissioners shall construct and operate. It gives in the law a two-year grace period. So in other words, by 1951, the detention home in Washoe County should have been constructed, or at least construction started. But preferably, the detention home should have been in operation.

Well, that particular board of county commissioners and the boards of county commissioners thereafter, even though they knew the context of the law (because I made a very special point of seeing, when a new board member was elected, that he received a copy of Senate Bill 41, and I remember underscoring with red pencil the specific area, so it would've been almost impossible not to read what should have been read), yet, over all of the years in this area, children had been held in jail. And when the city of Reno built the new jail on East Second Street, they did provide a couple of cells for children. The city of Reno did not bill the county for any of the expenses involved. Also, Washoe County

sheriff's office held some local youngsters along with federal juveniles. Sparks police department, when space was available, held some of the local or out-of-state runaways. None of these law enforcement agencies billed the county commissioners for board and room for these children.

I did explain in the early meetings that detention holding is expensive, and it is. It's very expensive. I suppose I can understand somewhat the attitude of those board members when they didn't want to take on another expensive operation when they found themselves really without any jurisdiction in that area, except the financial responsibility. The probation department is a county operation. And where it had practically been—well, really, a part-time operation prior to the 1949 legislature, they did have the expense of the probation department, but no expense for detention. Actually, what they did do was just totally ignore their responsibility. I had an office situated in the same building as the county welfare department, and these commissioners would be in and out of the county welfare department on meeting days of the month, and at no time did they ever bother to stop at my office to discuss anything. And if I did go out in the hallway or out in the alleyway when I saw one of them to talk to them, why, of course, their schedules were such-and-so-busy that they couldn't make an appointment with me. We would have public meetings in their chambers in the courthouse on occasion, and one or more might attend, but it was done reluctantly. And even though they might speak rather favorably of the possibility of having a detention home, the minute the meeting was over and doors were closed, they continued to ignore the matter.

This went on year after year, and finally, we were getting into the late '50's, and still nothing concrete had been accomplished.



Then, also, I can say to you that I personally was getting a bit tired of talking to the same groups about the same problems. With many groups in the area we couldn't've had more or better support, but they were stymied [laughing] as well as I. Many of them, though, continued to be terribly faithful, and it got to a point it was embarrassing for me to have to call these people and ask for another meeting and impose on their time and generosity.

### **PROBATION DEPARTMENT STAFFING**

This is just a matter of information for you, too. When I was appointed probation officer for the department, they already had a secretary who had been serving for more than two years, a Mrs. Mildred Wells. Mrs. Wells had served since April, 1947, and she continued to serve as secretary in the department until April, 1961, when she retired. At that time, almost everyone thought that she was a woman in her fifties, and were amazed to learn that she was seventy years of age. I think that's interesting.

In reference to staff, in 1949, when the judges appointed the committee and I was hired, there was a secretary only. And naturally, in the early days of organizing the department and handling cases, there was a backlog of cases that they (primarily the police department and some of the welfare departments) had been waiting for an officer to be appointed so that they could refer these cases. So it wasn't just a matter of keeping current as children were arrested. There were these backlog of cases, families in the community where the youngsters had been problems to law enforcement and to welfare and other agencies in the community for some time. And with all of these, the attitude was that now that there was a probation officer, they wanted something done. With most of

the cases, the ideas of "something done" was to get the children out of the community, that a boy would be committed to the boys' school, a girl would be placed in an institution for girls somewhere. And they were cases where youngsters had really been "in the hair" of these individuals, and they wanted something done.

The judge, Judge Maestretti, was anxious, too, to get something done to get these pressures out of his department. That was probably one of the first places where I had problems of communicating. Getting "something done" quickly wasn't necessarily the right or best plan for a child, and that because they came with a recommendation that they wanted a girl placed, say, for example, in the Good Shepherd Home in San Francisco, I didn't feel that it was right that this just be done one, two, three, four. I wanted an opportunity to study the case myself and to get background information myself and actually to correctly prepare a report for the court before ever appearing there with the child, and these things do take a considerable period of time. There was opposition to my "dragging my feet." Of course, I wasn't, but I was trying to conform with good—hopefully good—practices in probation. In fact, just to arrest a child and to take to court and commit bypasses the philosophy of probation. You learn in your investigations that possibly the child can continue in the community, if, say, for example, a foster home could be found, or maybe a change of home placement with a relative. Maybe there's a grandmother in the area very familiar with the family situation who could and would accept the child into her home. Maybe all the grandmother would need would be a little financial assistance from the parents, or possibly from the county.

With a number of these cases, I did find that the best planning was for the youngster

to remain in the community and under supervision. And there were a number that the investigation did show that it was probably better planning for the youngster to be placed in a facility like the boys' school near Elko. Anyway, I had to be all things in the department in the beginning—. And it wasn't as though there were just a few cases, and then next week two or three more would be arrested, then the next week another child or two would be arrested, and that I was starting out that way. I say I had this accumulated backlog to be working with. And then, because I was newly appointed, many of the groups in the area wanted to hear from the probation officer to learn what the plans were, what kind of a department was it going to be, what do you plan to do. I mean all of these requests to meet with their groups and speak were very genuine and very sincere. But at the same time, they were time-taking, and I found myself working from early morning until very late at night, and working at least six days out of the seven. It was quite a large undertaking for a man who hadn't had prior experience except the indoctrination period in San Joaquin County. I would have to admit, certainly, that I was not sufficiently well informed and felt reticent to come up with certain recommendations because I wasn't positive from the amount of investigation, or whether it was the best plan for the child.

As I've probably said to you before, and maybe on more than one occasion, it's a very, very serious business when you are talking about plans for someone else's child, so much more, even, than your own. For example, if you were to have a little fourteen-year-old girl referred who has been, to quote the police, "running around," who has gained a reputation, maybe in her neighborhood and maybe in the school, maybe in the community of—well, even the police used to use it so

often— say, of "promiscuous conduct." Maybe she's smoking, maybe she's using what a lot of people would consider as too much makeup, possibly her blouses or dresses were too sheer, so that this little youngster had gained a reputation of an undesirable individual in the neighborhood and in the school, and people wanted something done about it. Well, in making an investigation, maybe you would learn that this youngster had been already handed from aunt to uncle to cousin to grandmother back to mother and back to grandmother and maybe another uncle, and there were very many reasons for this child's feeling of insecurity, feelings of rejection, having been in a number of schools, feeling at a real disadvantage on the academic level; and maybe at this age, possibly being just in the sixth grade, she's a big girl having to associate with a bunch of little kids, or almost anything that you'd want to dream up. Or I can think back and think of particular cases. You have those chains of circumstances. And I have always been a very, very strong believer in handling the situation where we live, that most of the time, it's a better plan if the child can remain in the community. With so many of them, like this little girl I'm just talking about now, fourteen years old, it's—. Starting the teens, there are problems with just starting the teens, let alone all the other problems that she had.

Well, maybe after a number of weeks of having this youngster in a temporary kind of situation, maybe the schoolteacher would have reported to me, "Well, Mr. Nelson, in the last several weeks there does seem to be some improvement. Her attendance is regular. She hasn't been cutting. She is coming—well, better dressed. She isn't causing talk with the students in the room because of her attire. Her language has improved somewhat. She isn't fighting back with the dirty language with the

other youngsters.” And maybe the teacher’d say, “Well, I’m encouraged. I think there’s a possibility now of her being able to pass this particular grade. Is there something else that I could be doing here now in the classroom or with this case that would help you?”

Well, maybe in these few weeks, we’d eventually come up with some teamwork. There would be four or five of us working to help this child. Maybe during this time, too, I had her in the home of neighbors who had indicated concern, the parents having no objection. Maybe there was a child of this girl’s age in that home, and they were friends. So it does take time to make thorough investigations, to plan properly for the child before you can ever get to court. In fact, you can get several folders full of material, not necessarily all completely pertinent, but things that’ve been brought to your attention.

Where I found myself pretty much totally involved, I still had to be available to meet buses, trains, planes. I still had to be available when another child was brought to the police station to find out the whys and wherefores so that I didn’t have another child sitting in jail. And as I’ve said previously, it was a one-cell situation for the boys at the Reno police department, and a one-cell for the girls. At that time, too, we were getting what I thought was a large number of out-of-state runaways. And, of course, the faster I could move, the faster they could get back to their area of residence, where proper planning could be in the picture, and they’re not just sitting here in jail. So as the case load increased, I had to explain, naturally, to the probation committee and to the court that it was more than one person could handle and handle properly, and that I found myself, too, getting involved in cases of girls, that I felt that it was better that there be a woman in the picture, at least somewhere. Not that I

think that you have to be a woman to handle a girl on probation or a man to handle a boy, but I do think that there are situations and circumstances where it is better planning for the girl that she has a woman to talk to and to confide in and to ask for assistance. The girls, quite often, would be reticent to discuss some things with a male probation officer, which we all understand. Also, boys would be freer to discuss some things with men than they would with women.

So, primarily because of my concern, and with the girls in jail in particular, I did ask for assistance, and then eventually the committee and the court did see fit to name an assistant probation officer to work with me. They appointed Mrs. Abbie Foy, who had years of experience with the Nevada State Welfare Department, was a local resident, had been here for many years and knew the community. She started, then (in 1953), with the girl referrals from the police department, which was very helpful to me.

When Mrs. Foy no longer wished to stay with the department, we hired a Miss Norma Bell, who was formerly a resident in Elko and then in Ely and had gone to school in Salt Lake City to the University of Utah. Her work, her general education background was excellent for the probation department. Although her major was in speech therapy, she still had the background in sociology and psychology and was child oriented. In fact, I could even say at this point that it was one of the happiest days for me and one of the happiest days for the department when Miss Norma Bell was selected by the court to serve because she was, without question, one of the very best probation officers I’ve ever known. Even though she hadn’t had previous probation experience and was trained with me in the department, she took to it just as naturally as anyone might, and then she had

such a very (I think I couldn't use any word but wonderful) wonderful feeling for children and was one of those rare individuals who was able to be objective where it was necessary to be objective, and yet could establish such a good, sound, warm relationship with the child. Miss Bell also had the knack of being able to establish quickly a very good relationship with parents and relatives of a child. Also, she could and did establish the same kind of relationship with other agencies and law enforcement and people in the community. Norma very quickly was an experienced, capable, efficient, wonderful probation officer. And over the years, I have often said that Norma's still my favorite probation officer. She worked several years, and, after her marriage to Mr. John Carlson, continued to work another year. He at that time had been in the military, a West Point graduate, was also a Nevada native, from McGill, and went back to school for an advanced degree in engineering, and, of course, after securing his degree, had to go where employment was, and they left the community.

Then Norma started having her own family, and today has four young children. So she didn't continue in probation as a career, but for the years she did work, she was an outstanding probation officer and would have been in any department that might have employed her.

Then the next woman to be employed in the probation department was a Miss Catherine Lancaster, who later was Mrs. William Lore. Catherine was a graduate of the University of Nevada, was raised and educated in Fallon and was a graduate of the Churchill County High School, and then here at the University of Nevada, and then had been a buyer for Macy's in San Francisco, where she'd had good background experience in working with people. She had not at any time been working, so to speak, with children. But she

had a very interesting background with this employment. Even though there might not appear to be any kind of a correlation as a buyer with the store, and traveling, and then having to work with a lot of people, it was beneficial to her in her work with the people in a probation department.

I would have to say, too, that Catherine Lancaster is one of the very fortunate individuals who has one of the finest minds of anyone I've ever met. I would believe, too, although I don't even know if I ever asked her, I think she also has a photographic memory. She is one of those A-plus people, and always has been, and always would be. I don't know that necessarily her subjects always indicated that because she was always so very much interested in so many things that grades per se might not have been that important to her. But most certainly, I say she is of the A-plus caliber. A very extensive reader all of her life, and still is, she had a very, very broad background. She very quickly, as Norma did, became a very efficient worker and a very conscientious probation officer.

I couldn't say that she wouldn't necessarily establish the very warm relationships with children as Norma did. Cathy was more selective herself, and when she could establish that kind of a relationship with the children that she wished to do so, she didn't necessarily do it with all children. She seemed to be able to work better with children who, themselves, were very capable academically and were bright individuals. Cathy didn't have the patience with a dull child or the slower child as Norma did. (And maybe it's not even necessarily right to make a comparison, but it does explain the difference in personalities in the department.) Catherine continued and worked with the probation department for eleven years, and quite possibly will again when she returns to Washoe County to reside.

She's with her husband now, who's getting his degrees in dentistry at Western Reserve in Cleveland. While he is at that university and getting his degree (and he has another year or two), Catherine is working for the Cleveland city probation department, working in a ghetto area, and that's another story, some of her stories that she's told me about her work there. She can, of course, now, make comparisons of the little probation department here. She said to me, when I talked to her when she was here several months ago, that for a time, she had been critical of me and some of my thinking. She realized very quickly in Cleveland that we here were far ahead of the city of Cleveland in our philosophies in working in the best interest for children. Of course, that's a very, very large metropolitan area. She was assigned into a ghetto area, which is primarily working with black children. And she found, of course, an altogether different kind of probation officer life. There were areas of her assignment that she could not go into unless accompanied by a male probation officer and/or a police officer. Part of this ghetto area she could not go into at all on Fridays after three p.m., when these ADC mothers, in particular, would be getting their checks. It wasn't safe for a tall blonde, [laughing] attractive Caucasian woman to be in the area.

And where that's an altogether different story, I would imagine that Catherine's background experience with this community had helped her a great deal with her work in Cleveland. When she returns to this area and wanted to go back into probation, I certainly would think her years of experience in Cleveland would be most beneficial.

Catherine could write her reports for the court very quickly, without errors. She had the ability to make very excellent court presentations. She established good

relationships with all the institution people. And I would say she always did an exceptional job of following through with her children that the court did place in institutions. When they returned to this community after the institution placement, she again would be helpful and would continue her relationships.

She worked with quite a few boys as well as with girls. Her primary case load was girls. she did an exceptional job with the severely emotionally disturbed youngster, especially if the child had a high IQ and she was able to challenge them academically.

She did, before leaving the department, get into group therapy. She was interested and did attend state and regional and national conferences and workshops, and did improve herself as the years went on, so that today she's probably one of the more capable young probation officers in the county.

Then we hired, too, in those early days [in 1954] a Mr. Thomas F. Allard, who was a locally raised young man. His father and mother have resided here for many, many years. Tom was a Reno High School graduate and a graduate from the University of Nevada. Tom is a very capable and very intelligent individual, and picked up probation work very quickly, even though he had not had prior experience. In fact, our little department became a training [laughing] department, too. After just several months, a position was open in this community with the United States Probation Department (or they're referred to as federal probation officers). Tom applied for and received the position. So he wasn't with us even a year. And he still continues, to the present time, as the United States probation officer for northern Nevada, and works out of and under the direction of the office in Clark County.

Roderick P. Smith, also a local boy and a graduate of Reno High School and the



University of Nevada, worked for us as a young man and, as many people do who are trying to find themselves in a profession in which they can be happy, only worked a short time (to 1953] and then decided that he did want to go back to school, and eventually went for a time to the University of California. Today, Roderick lives in San Jose and has his own private detective agency. I don't know if you would call that any kind of a correlation with juvenile probation; I personally think not. But that is what he's doing. we operates a private detective agency.

Another young man in those early days [1957-59] was Mr. Thomas [P.] Higgins, who at the present time is a lieutenant with the Reno Police Department. Tom worked primarily with younger boys, and was very capable, and probably, to this day, would still be with the Washoe County Probation Department, but Tom had health problems. And where we were such a small department, we couldn't continue to keep the position open for him for a number of months, I did assist with his cases, as did others in the department so that we could keep him on the payroll and to help him. You know how medical costs mount up. Even in those days, they were very, very expensive. So we had to replace Tom because we needed someone physically able to work full time. Eventually Tom went with the Reno police department, and over the years, has had to continue to take leaves of absence. In fact, just this last summer, he was not working again, and has recently been reinstated with the Reno police department. But it was never anything to do in any way whatsoever at all with his character, or with his ability, or with his work. It was just a physical health reason, 'cause he, again, was a very good probation officer, very interested in the young children. His wife is a teacher at the Billingshurst Junior High School and

has been for a number of years. They have three teenagers, three very outstanding young people in our community that reflect the conscientious kind of parents that they have.

Also, prior to the time of our moving to Wittenberg Hall on Mill Street, we employed Mr. Philip Hannifin, who, when we did open Wittenberg Hall, became the first director. Philip, again, was a local young man.

(I don't know whether I've previously mentioned it or not, but I was of a mind to encourage the committee and the judges to appoint local people because I felt there definitely was an advantage in having young people who had lived here for a time, who had gone to school in this area, and who knew our kind of twenty-four-hour community and all of the other things that make up our Reno-Sparks city. And also, I felt that these people would be more inclined, too, to want to work with children here, rather than to send them somewhere hopefully for some kind of rehabilitation. Rehabilitation, to me, is the idea that we learn to adjust where we live and to function well in our immediate environment. You might, in an institution, learn to adjust beautifully to that institution, learn how to do those things where you get along with the institution staff, and yet you might come back into the community not much better able to function here than you were when you left. So all those things combined, to make a long story short, why, I would encourage the employing of local people.)

Philip was another excellent and exceptional employee. Philip was a far better probation officer than the above average man or woman in this country. Philip, like Catherine Lancaster Lore, has a very brilliant mind. He has many interests. He is well read. He is very capable. Also, Philip, like Catherine, is personally ambitious and able

to improve their abilities. Philip went on from the small Washoe County juvenile probation department to work with the Job Corps on a regional level. He was working with our present governor, O'Callaghan, and then eventually went into state employment, and as you know, following the last general election, Philip Hannifin was named by the governor to head the Gaming Commission for the state of Nevada. In that position, Philip will do a very superior job for the state of Nevada, as he did do a very superior job for Washoe County. Philip is not only very much interested in children, Philip is very much interested in people. And I suppose that shows, too, by his going on from one position to another. It might be that now he's even more interested in big people than children, or with adults. But at the time he worked with children, nobody was more interested than he.

We hired also, prior to opening Wittenberg Hall, another probation officer, Don Dunn. We also had another probation officer for a time by the name of Don Young. And Don Young is now employed by a California probation department in San Jose County, working with dependent and neglected children.

Bruce [Hill] also worked in those early years when we were still in the Courthouse Annex. Bruce, again, was a Nevadan. He lived for quite a few years in Lovelock. In fact, I had Bruce in a history class in the Lovelock elementary school when he was in the fourth grade. He was also a University of Nevada graduate. He didn't work for a very long period of time in the department. And there again, he, himself, felt, because he was still looking for a future career, that he wanted something else other than probation, and for many years had wanted to be an attorney. He made several efforts to get back to school and to study law. But because he was married and started raising a family, he

found problems difficult to overcome as far as getting that law degree. And he didn't, and hasn't, obtained the law degree. But he did go to Sacramento, and to help support himself and his family while he was there, did go to work with the Sacramento County probation department and did take other employment. He was an insurance adjuster at one time, and was in the insurance field, also, for a time. He did go back to the Sacramento probation department about five or six years ago, and has continued to be employed by them. The last time I talked to Bruce, he was working with adult probation. Apparently, they have a policy in their department that they work for a while with the children, then work with adults, and then alternate back and forth, and do not stay either in one district of Sacramento or in one area or section, and also, not solely with adults or children, but they rotate. Of course, I approve of that, too. it gives a much better general background. Bruce is still a deputy probation officer, and, as far as I know, will continue with the probation department.

William Lore was hired before we ever got to Wittenberg Hall. In fact, we were still in the annex. Bill came from the South, from North Carolina. And the time we first got acquainted, he was working as a case worker in the county welfare department in the same building. Bill, upon graduation from college, went with professional baseball and played with the Red Sox farm team. And [he] then came into the Reno area and was working for the Washoe County welfare department when I got acquainted with him. One day, just in casual conversation, he indicated an interest in working with the arrested child, and I told him that there was a vacancy to occur, and he did submit an application and was employed. It was 1959, and he went with us when we moved into Wittenberg Hall.



I guess that one of his secret wishes over all the years was to be a dentist. [Laughing] After quite a few years in the probation department, he decided that he wanted to be a dentist and put in applications throughout the country to be admitted to a dental college. And because when he started making application he was thirty-six years of age, he ran into a situation where these schools, even though he has a master's degree in physical education from North Carolina (he had two degrees), he still found it very difficult to be accepted by a college to study dentistry because of his age, or at least that was what they were telling him (laughing). And we all in the department, because Bill's terribly well liked by all the staff, and I, too, was especially annoyed because of these rejections. At least twenty dollars had to accompany the application, and the boy was spending a lot of money and getting nowhere in being accepted. I personally feel that that's a very, very undemocratic process. I think that we've always encouraged education in this country, at all ages. And even though, as he was told by some of the schools, a lot of dentists are thinking of their retirement about the age that he was thinking of going to school, I feel that if you apply to a college for a particular field of endeavor, and you can qualify, that age shouldn't be any factor whatsoever. Because once you get in, and age would prove to be a factor that would be a different matter.

But anyway, Bill did run into all of this rejection until he applied at Western Reserve. Me learned that it's one of the better dental schools and applied and was accepted. If he doesn't specialize in some particular dental field, he will finish in another year. If he does specialize, he'll have another two years. And from what I hear from friends, why, he's more apt to specialize than not. So he has a couple more years of college. He's done (which, of

course, he would) very, very well academically and every other way.

Bill and Cathy married while they were both assistant probation officers with the department. They do plan to come back to this area, There Bill will set up a dental practice. And (as) I say, I wouldn't be a bit surprised for Catherine to, again, be employed by the Washoe County probation department with all of her background experience.

There are young men serving as probation officers in the department now who were originally hired as group supervisors in the detention home. And partly because of the pay scale, and, I think, also, more so because of their interest and realizing the challenge of being a probation officer working in the community rather than just as a group supervisor caring for a child in the detention home, they have continued in the department.

Mr. Jay Carter started as a group supervisor when he was a student at the University of Nevada. Now he's a probation officer working in the detention home again, hut he has been, for several years, working as a probation officer in the field. Mr. (Terrence] Terry Cason, who is also a University of Nevada graduate, started as a group supervisor while attending the University. He's now a probation officer with the department. Mr. James Arnoldson, while attending the University of Nevada, started employment with the Washoe County probation department as a group supervisor in the detention home, He's now working as a field probation officer. Mr. Wally Norbeck, who is not a University graduate but has had some semesters at the University, started while a student as a group supervisor at Wittenberg Hall. He's now working as a probation officer. In fact, Frank Sullivan, who is the chief probation officer today, and who replaced me, started as a group supervisor when Wittenberg Hall opened. He

was hired by Mr. Philip Hannifin. They had been students together at Manogue.

So quite a few of the staff now have had their initial training as group supervisors. Of course, I think there are at least twelve or thirteen probation officers today. Miss Sonja Dotson [Mrs. Keith Vowles], while a student at the University of Nevada and until she graduated, was employed by the Washoe County Welfare Department. And then when she indicated her interest in the probations field rather than welfare, she was hired by the court. She still works with the department and has now for several years.

Elsa Frietag, who was a University graduate, later got her master's degree in California, started probation employment in California, worked for several years with San Mateo County. When she returned to Washoe County to reside, she was employed by the probation department just before I resigned and retired. Elsa eventually married Mr. Wally Norbeck, and they recently became parents of a little boy. And she's retired now from the probation field, but he's continued there.

There are a half a dozen other probation officers in the department. One that was hired before I left was Mr. John Tachihara. John is a Californian and educated in the California schools, and then was doing his work for his doctorate at the University of Oregon, and has everything completed with that except his dissertation. He came into this area for personal reasons and took employment with us. I think he's been there now about four or five years. He still is a field officer.

Another young man was Adler Larsen, who is known by his nickname, Kurt. Kurt was hired at the same time John Tachihara was. After Kurt worked a couple years, working primarily with small children, he knew that this was the field he wanted as a life work. So I encouraged him to go back to school and

work for a master's degree, which he did. He went up to the University of Oregon because of Mr. Tachihara's influence and did get his master's about a year ago. Now he's working with one of the counties in the Bay area; it's the county in which Walnut Creek is located (Contra Costa). He has a large case load in Contra Costa County. And most of his case load is also the younger offenders.

Another probation officer who worked in the department for a little more than four years was Miss Louise Sims. She had a background of work with welfare, and then also with a children's home, and had worked in probation for a number of years in California in the Merced area. Just about the time that I was retiring, Louise decided, too, that she wanted to get her master's degree. So she went back to Fresno, where she got her AB degree, and she will receive her MSW in June of this year; she's in graduate school now. I don't know whether Louise will plan to come back into this community or not, but I know that she will continue her work with children. She, again, is a very, very capable, very mature adult, well adjusted herself, so that she's very capable of working with children who need assistance. Louise worked with some very, very difficult cases when we first got into the drug scene here. And even though a number of them had to be institutional-placed for their own best interests, Louise continued her relationship while they were in the institutions, too, and picked it up again when they came back here. Louise was responsible for a number of these youngsters, who were experimenting with drugs, getting out of the drug scene. I see them in this area now, and I know from them that they are free. They have good jobs and they're getting along fine, or they're here at the University, but they're not participating in the drug culture.

Louise was a very exceptionally good probation officer. F was happy to see her go back to school and get her MSW because she is a single woman and has to support herself, has years ahead of her for a career. Ro better to have her MSW and be available for the better positions and earn more money than just stay in the field all the rest of her life.

I want you to understand, too, although I don't see any particular point in mentioning names, during these years, from the time Mrs. Foy was hired, right up to the present time, there have been probation officers employed, as there were group supervisors employed in the detention home, who were not satisfactory employees, and they had to be terminated, and sometimes with a considerable bit of problem for me, as the chief probation officer, being able to get the court to agree that their work was of such a nature, or their personal life of such a nature that I felt that they were not an asset to either the department or to the children. Some of them opposed their terminations. Most, upon being given an opportunity to resign, would do so. One male probation officer was terminated because he absolutely refused to do his paper work. He procrastinated on and on and on. He didn't know which youngsters were under supervision and which were on probation and which had been terminated and when they'd been assigned or necessarily what he was doing. And, [laughing] as you know, you have to be completely systematic; not that that's the importance of it, but you certainly do have to do your tapes and write your reports and keep your work current and know what's going on. But I say he, for more than any other reason, was terminated because he wouldn't do his paper work.

Another young man was terminated because he'd do a very first-class job with the youngsters that he really liked, but if he didn't

like a child or was antagonistic to the child's parents, he just couldn't work with them. Then he'd want somebody else to take over the case. And where occasionally you can have (I've had it myself) a personality conflict, or you might feel that someone else in the department could handle a case, for whatever reason, better than you, why, we've always made changes. But this person just wanted to work with those cases of his own choosing. It caused troubles with the other staff, and, of course, eventually caused trouble for me. It caused troubles for me with law enforcement because they knew that a particular case had been assigned to him and that certain things were supposed to be part of the program, and they weren't being followed through.

We have had problems, I regret to say, with a couple employees who were hired to work in the detention home, for moral reasons. One man was hired and later arrested in this area for child molesting (his own daughter). He came from the County of Los Angeles with the very best possible recommendations. In fact, that particular person taught me a lesson: I will [not], and have never since, recommended anyone for any position unless I felt that that recommendation was warranted.

We hired a woman in the detention home who became, shall we say, too interested in one of the female probation officers. We had to terminate her as soon as we had knowledge of it. She hadn't, as far as we ever (were) able to learn, conducted herself improperly with any of the girls under her supervision. But I say, she became enamored of one of the female staff.

We had to terminate the employment of one young probation officer because he would check out monies for a ticket for a youngster that supposedly was going somewhere, according to his statement for the voucher. It wasn't so. And he was gambling. He would pay

the money back, but he was very irregular in his practices. Though it did involve very few dollars, one time was one too many, and he was terminated.

One probation officer was terminated years back primarily because she lied to me. That was the time of jail holding, and she told me one day that she had talked with a little girl who was in jail, and she had not done so. When I talked to the girl later, why, she hadn't seen this worker at all, hadn't seen her for a couple days. I think that is one time in my twenty years as a probation officer where I lost my cool. I didn't handle it as professionally as it should have been handled. I got the consent from the court to terminate, and then gave this officer—I'm ashamed to say it to you, but I think I gave her an hour to get off the premises. It was not done professionally, but I was infuriated at the time that she, for personal reasons, had not bothered to talk to this little girl who was in custody who was in there for no arrest in the world except for dependency, a home situation. She had run away from home, and with every reason in the world for running. And I say that person was terminated for nothing else than for an unadulterated lie.

Over the years, too, there were several that, if you checked the records, worked a short period of time because they found, and we found, too (and it was a matter of mutually terminating employment), that they just didn't fit into probation work, that they couldn't accept, for example, the language of the children. They couldn't establish working relationships with parents of certain children. They just got into a field in which they had no particular talent.

We mentioned how some found probation not to their liking, or they weren't fitted to the particular profession. Sometimes they did a better job, really, than they thought they

did, and they would be individuals with their own hangups so that they didn't have sufficient confidence in themselves. Yet, in my observation, I thought that they did a far better job with the youngsters than they thought. Of course, always, the number one thing with me was how they did care about and how they could work to assist children. And degrees are great; but you can have ten degrees, if you can't work with a child, why, it's all for naught.

On the whole, I'm happy to be able to tell you that the committee and the court were very fortunate in their selection of probation officers and detention home staff. Over the years, by far, the large number were very, very capable people, very fine people, and I have met officers in other departments, especially in the western states, and I think that I can say, as a generalization (generalizations I don't think much of, personally, but I think I can make that general statement honestly), that the people I've become acquainted with in the profession in the western states are of a higher— well, how would I say that? People that are really dedicated. They're working because they love to work with people, and not just for salary, and not for personal gain. So there's a lot of satisfaction in knowing that.

Reno is going to have the Western Correctional Association's annual conference this year at Harrah's Hotel. And a lot of those people I've known twenty, fifteen, ten, five years, and I'm looking forward already to renewing acquaintances.

### **THE ARRESTED CHILD: OVERVIEW**

Now, when I took the position, the arrested child, if he had to be detained, was held in the Reno city jail. If he was arrested by Washoe County, he was generally held in the old Washoe County jail. And sparks

police would hold Sparks children in their jail, although most of the time there wasn't room to keep the boys and girls separated from the adults, so Sparks children were also held in the Reno city jail. Even though I think the three institutions in this county were generally better than many similar facilities throughout the country, they still were jail holding, and there probably is not too many things that are more difficult for a child to adjust to than jail holding. The child is fearful, not knowing what is going to happen. In those facilities, the child did not have any outdoor recreation whatsoever. The meals left almost everything to be desired. Almost any miserable comment that you ever heard about jail holding did take place here. It was truly one of the most miserable things that I have had to work with in my whole life.

A little girl, for example, from California, would come to Washoe County to be married, and a telegram would probably have preceded her arrival. But even though she might have appeared to be eighteen years of age, she was really only fourteen years of age. And the man that she was planning to marry had neglected to tell her that he was already married and had a wife and three children, things like that. There was no place at that time to hold that little girl, except jail, until she could be released to proper jurisdiction.

A little girl in this community in a very bad home situation and who, possibly frightened because of a parent or parents threatening to physically punish her, had run away. When she was found and brought back here, and because the law is very, very definite about runaway children, she would have to be held for a court hearing and held in jail.

At the same time, there was only one girls' cell. There could be in that cell a very sophisticated young girl under the age of eighteen who could be held for prostitution,

intoxication, promiscuous sex activities, the girl could have a venereal disease—all those things. And yet we had to put these other little youngsters in the jail with them.

Now, there was no separation with the boys' cell. There was just one in the Reno city jail, and it had three double bunk beds, in the middle of the room a steel table and two benches that were fastened to the floor, a shower, and a toilet. That was the juvenile holding facility. Much of the time, there were more than six boys, so for each additional boy who went into the room a mattress was put on the floor. That's where he slept, given a mattress and a blanket. And when there were more boys than room at the table, the rest of them sat on the floor to eat the meal. You know youngsters are youngsters, and they have a lot of energy, generally, and there would be a lot of horseplay. They played some games that—actually, some of them were very sadistic and cruel. And children were injured. I can give you an example of one of the games.

The group of boys would pick a "patsy," and having saved back one of the tin cups from mealtime would fill it with water, either from the faucet with the shower or from the toilet—and probably more often than not, it was from the toilet. And they would force this boy to drink the water. You know the body can contain just so much liquid, and eventually, they're going to upchuck. And then, if the boy didn't upchuck soon enough, they then would hit him in the stomach with their fists, bringing about the upchucking. That was just one little game.

Then one of the great tragedies of holding in institutions and prisons and jails is the fact that you do have those individuals that are aggressive in homosexual activities. We would have youngsters who became victims of these. Even though they were all youngsters by law, under the age of eighteen, the age



bracket would vary—there could be a nine or ten-year-old in there with a seventeen-and-a-half-year-old. The out-of-state runaways were in the same cell; escapees from other states' institutions were in the same cell. The police didn't necessarily have any information about the youngster except he was "believed to be," and was being held. Often, it took considerable time for me to locate the legal residence of a boy.

I remember in those early years, we had a boy in the Reno city jail who first told me he was from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. I checked that information out, and he was not known. Then he said that he actually ran away from Portland, Maine, and that was the first time I ever knew that there was a Portland in Maine. The family (he was telling a partial truth) had lived at one time in Portland, Maine. But when I got the letter back from the welfare department there, they said that the family hadn't been in the community for several years. About that time, too, When I confronted the boy with that information, why, the very bad food was getting to him, and having to be held so long, and then he told me that he was from Stockton, California. When I checked with the San Joaquin County probation department, I learned that he was an escapee from a state mental hospital. They arranged for me to meet them at the state line with this young man. I did take him to the state line at the time designated. Just before we got there, he said to me, "When I get back there, do you s'pose they'll continue my syph treatment?" And I told him that I was sure that they would.

I drove back to the Reno city jail, and there were six local residents in the jail as were there several more from other states, and I explained to them as well as I knew how what this boy had told me about his having a venereal disease, and that if any of them had

had any kind of contact with him—. And I'm sure one of them at the time was nine, and, you know, you have to be especially careful in discussing something like that with a nine-year-old, but I didn't have time to get to every parent, and everything.

So all of the youngsters told me no, that they had not had any kind of physical contact with that seventeen-and-a-half-year-old from California. And then, the next early morning, about three a.m., the booking officer at the Reno city jail called me at home and told me that he had a couple of young men practically in hysterics in the jail cell and wanting me, and he couldn't calm them down, and would I come over?

I did, and these two boys (and one at a time, in talking to them privately) explained to me that they had had physical relations with that boy while he was in the cell, and one of them had said that he'd had daily contact with him. So I explained to them about medical help and that it would be forthcoming immediately. I had asked them the day before so that I would know whether to get them to the doctor, or their parents to get them to their family doctors or to the venereal disease clinic. As it turned out, before it was all over, six boys admitted to relations with this individual, and two of the cases were positive upon medical examination, and four were negative.

[When] I told you that jail holding generally includes any or all of the horrible things that you have ever heard about it, why, it did, and I had to live with it and work with it, and I thought it was unbelievably terrible.

At that time, it was rather common knowledge in the community that as fast as the police arrested the youngsters that "that man," meaning me, would be up there getting the child out. And there couldn't be too much point in their arresting the child

for an offense if all I was going to do was get him immediately back out on the street. There was much—well, a very large problem of this, and I will admit to you very frankly that I did do just that because it was the only way that I could protect some of these children. We did not have foster homes as shelter care of any number at the time. Where I did have a couple of foster homes that I could use for the very young child, most of the foster homes that were being used then did not want the older delinquent child in their home, and rightfully so. They shouldn't be mixed with the little dependent or the little abandoned child. I concur with that wholeheartedly. I did this more with the younger children, as the only way I could protect them was to get them out and explain to their parents or parent or guardian why I was releasing when they had just been arrested, and that I would expect them to supervise the child very carefully. All of that time, too, I had the problem with the runaway child because I couldn't release the runaways because then they could—and a lot of them would—run away again.

So it seemed for a long period of time that almost everything I did wasn't enough, and it wasn't necessarily right, and I knew it. I did discuss very frequently with the court and with the committee and with other interested individuals the need for Washoe County to comply with statutes and build a detention home. The governing body that determined expenditure of public funds for that facility was the county commissioners. The county was not being billed by the Reno city jail for any of those youngsters for their food or lodging. Sparks city jail was not billing the county. When I came up with the proposal (naturally, in compliance with statute), they didn't seem to take this statute that seriously, and it was said many times that, like the director of the state welfare department at that

time, I was interested, as she was, in building a small empire for myself. And not that name calling ever solved anything, but I mean it was used with me as a personal matter. It was never my detention home. It was a detention home for children, and, naturally, a million percent improved kind of facility for me to use. But I say, it wasn't mine.

### **POLICE AND POLICE ATTITUDES TOWARD ARRESTED CHILDREN**

I would have to say in the beginning, in reference to law enforcement, or the Washoe County sheriff's office, the Reno police department, the Sparks police department, that it took me a considerable period of time to realize that a lot of it wasn't just opposition to probation. It was that the probation department had been reactivated and was functioning again—and it hadn't for a period of time—"and these other agencies had become involved in other ways of handling some of the problems that were properly within the probation department, and they just really didn't want to change again. They were doing certain things that worked quite well, they thought, for them, and they didn't want to change and refer these youngsters because, by statute, law enforcement officials may make the arrest. That's for sure. They have all the authority for making the arrest. But, by statute, they do not have any authority to follow through with the handling of the case, They are not to supervise, and they are not to counsel with, except in conjunction with the arrest.

Sparks police had youngsters coming to the Sparks city jail to talk to an officer. Reno police had a very extensive program of youngsters on probation to law enforcement officials. The sheriff's office were not involved with too many local youngsters. They had



always been a holding facility for federal juveniles. They did have these youngsters who were under age eighteen being held in the sheriff's office. But by and far, the majority of the boys were held for having committed federal offenses.

The police, and primarily the Reno police, because Reno had the largest population, were handling the most youngsters, I think it was natural that they would have evolved rather an extensive program in procedures following the arrest of a child because the probation department had not been functioning. Our department was new, and they didn't necessarily know what we were going to do, or how well we'd follow through. Arid, I suppose, with some good reason, they questioned things in the beginning. But some of this continued on, even after our department was getting quite well established. By then, they had been shown that we intended to work in the best interest of the child, but they still wanted to—where they were especially interested in a particular case—participate in the disposition. They wanted to be sure that their recommendations were the ones followed by the court.

Now, in many cases, I think it is most helpful to the court and to the probation department if the apprehending officer can be present in the juvenile court hearing to present the facts in conjunction with the arrest, and even for the law enforcement official to express his wishes as far as future planning for the child. Now, their thinking may be at the opposite end of the pole from mine, but that doesn't mean that it can't be of assistance to the court in making a determination. That isn't what I'm talking about with law enforcement, not really. Just like many probation officers will object to the way the law has moved today with the children being represented by attorneys, and

will make statements of, "Well, why do they need an attorney? I'm there to represent the child." Well, I've never gone into court with a child who had an attorney appointed for him, or whose parents had arranged for an attorney, or when an attorney was present, that it didn't help the case in good long-range planning for the child. And I was always happy when a lawyer became involved.

The philosophy of the probation department, to be willing to work over rather long periods of time locally with a child, did meet with opposition with law enforcement officials. Because if they knew this child to be a troublemaker, so to speak, in the community, they felt a solution was, "If we get him out of here, then we won't have this problem with him," and that has a lot of merit. It is true. If a youngster's causing problems in a particular part of town, or he's a thorn in the flesh to a group of downtown merchants, if he's making certain school people unhappy with his conduct and behavior in school, I can see why they wanted more of arrest-court hearing place in an institution-get him out of the community.

When, you know that my philosophy, from the very beginning, and still is today where I'm no longer a part of it, is that no matter how long it might take, as long as it's humanly possible, keep the child in the community where he lives and work out the problem where he and the family reside and where he will generally live following a period of incarceration. And no one has ever been able to change my philosophy along those lines. But it was in conflict—well, not only with law enforcement, [but] too, with many other individuals, and as we discussed earlier, also with newspaper people.

In the beginning, too, the arrested child, if he had to be held, was held in jail. It was a situation where it was practically impossible

for a probation officer to be able to work well with it or to handle it. Regardless of the offense, if the children had to be held, they were put in the same cell. I told you of the little runaway girl who had really not violated the law as much as she had exercised poor judgment, coming into the community to get a marriage license and get married when she was under age, or she was with a man who was already married. I certainly say that it's poor judgment, and I certainly say that the law should move in to protect this child. But I will still say, as I did then, that holding this little girl in a jail cell with very sophisticated delinquents was not the proper way to work with children. I've never changed and never will in my feeling about jail holding. I think it is the worst possible thing that you can do to lock a child in jail. A lot of people have the idea, "Well, lock 'em up. Teach 'em a lesson."

Generally, the lesson that you would like to teach isn't the lesson that they learn from the period of incarceration. As I've also said already, many of the youngsters can be very, very cruel to each other, physically and mentally. They learn things that have nothing whatsoever to do with their case. I have felt that many times youngsters were damaged so severely that it would be a problem that would stay with them all the rest of their life, even though, in the beginning, the arrest was for an offense that I would consider quite minor in nature. A youngster who might continue to steal bicycles over a period of several months, it is a problem to him, to the police, and to the community, and most certainly to the families whose youngsters originally owned the stolen bicycles. I understand that. : understand that very well. But if that youngster, through association in jail, is taught by a very sophisticated older boy, "Tell, why are you wasting your time on bicycle thefts? Why don't you do as I do, become a house

burglar? Gee, you can go into a home and get a lot of money. Honey's very hard to identify." Or, the youngster, during the jail holding time, is exposed to an aggressive homosexual. That experience can be far, far more harmful than anything else that might develop because of an arrest. You know that, also, I do not like institutionalizing children if you can work out other things. Even the very good institutions, I still will prefer other things if they can be worked out in the community. Even as bad as a home situation might be, quite often I have known cases where what I would personally call a bad home situation was still a better home situation, or a better living situation, for this child than sending them to an institution.

I also realize that police officers were in a different position than I, in that, With some of these families, they were not only arresting the children, but arresting the mother, or arresting the father, or having to go to the home to help with a family brawl. They had a more total picture, sometimes, of a family than I had. It can be very annoying to the police officials to have to go back week in and week out to a particular address. I understand how they begin to wonder, "Well, what is he doing, if anything, about this family? The arrests go right on." Some of the criticism had some merit. if the children had to be held, they were put in the same cell. ! told you of the little runaway girl who had really not violated the law as much as she had exercised poor judgment, coming into the community to get a marriage license and get married when she was under age, or she was with a man who was already married. I certainly say that it's poor judgment, and I certainly say that the law should move in to protect this child. But I will still say, as I did then, that holding this little girl in a jail cell with very sophisticated delinquents was not the proper way to work with children. I've never changed and never

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There are not easy solutions, generally, for most of these cases, and when I talk about problems arising because of the holding, another example is this: Many of the police officers in those early years, of the '50's, were not trained police officers. With very few exceptions, almost none of them had any understanding of child psychology. Most of them had not had any college training. I'm not saying they were all bad police officers, but they weren't good police officers for working with children. A lot of them on their beats used the language that they heard on the beat, and then in turn used that same language in talking to the children. And name calling a child, if they had had a little bit of psychology, and if they'd've been trying at all to listen to the child, which they didn't listen, and with their name-calling, they generally, instead of helping the child with his attitude towards law enforcement, or towards the community, did produce a youngster more bitter, more hateful, and quite often a youngster that wanted to go out and do something again to get even. The children being held in the cell at the Reno city jail did get very rambunctious. They did get very loud. And they would make a mess in the cell. I don't say that they didn't do all of those things.

The police, then, in retaliation, take away this privilege, that privilege—and there were practically none anyway. But they lost all their reading material. Then it was totally idle time twenty-four hours a day because there was no recreation period, there was no nothing. From the time they were booked in until they were booked out, they were held in the cell.

I doubt very much if there is any jail holding that would be conducive to anything good in rehabilitation. Jail holding compounds the problem. Jail holding creates new problems. And segregating by the sexes in jail, just like in prisons, does create problems as they refer to healthy sex habits.

We did hold youngsters that had absolutely horrible home backgrounds. We might not have had any of that information at the beginning of the jail holding time. The youngster might have been in and out of jail before we even learned that this child had tendencies along a particular line, or this was a very cruel youngster, or this was a sadistic youngster, or this youngster did have homosexual tendencies.

So, even by talking to the individual police officers, talking to them in groups, making talks in the community, there was enough misunderstanding, there was a lot of misinformation, there was a lot of apathy within the community. When you have a lot of residents who don't know what's going on, could care less what's going on, your cry doesn't get very loud, "We must get the children out of jail." The years went by, and where we should have opened our detention home, Wittenberg Hall, in 1951, we opened Wittenberg Hall on February the twenty-seventh, 1961, for children, ten years later.

Now, I will say this, also, about detention holding. It also has a lot of disadvantages. But it is a very, very much better way of holding children, rather than jail. If a child is resting

or sleeping, and a gruff, mean voice awakens the child with an expression of, "Get your fat ass off of that bunk," or, "God damn you, get up," or, "You little bastard, you gonna sleep all day," you have done something harmful to a child before he's even started the day. If you name-call in the course of the day, if you are disrespectful to the child during the day, and he can't escape any of this because he's locked up, you are going to have a youngster, by the time he's released from that facility, more bitter, more hateful. He's going to be the youngster that, if we were still holding youngsters in jail here today, that, on the street, would call, "Pig!" when the officer went by.

When the food was brought to the cell—and it was very, very miserable food—and in a tin pan was some half-cooked or uncooked oatmeal, and there was no sugar to put on it, there was no half-and-half to put on it, and most of the time there was no milk to put on it, and then two pieces of bread were tossed on top of the mush or the cereal, and then the coffee cup was set on top of the two pieces of the bread, and the coffee was deliberately spilled onto the bread, onto the mush, and that's breakfast, you can't very well start a child out to think or act any better during the day. When the second meal arrives and it is uncooked, or not totally cooked macaroni (I think undone is the right word), and maybe there's a little catsup for it, or watered-down catsup; maybe there isn't. Maybe there's some salt and pepper, and maybe there isn't. And maybe there's a half a hot dog, or a hot dog served with that macaroni. And then, again, there's two pieces of bread, and again this coffee is spilled on the bread, on the rest of the food, and that's the second meal of a two-meal day. You're not doing very much of anything to assist a child.

If the weather is pleasant and he can't go outside, you have further punishment

by the confinement. If there is no exercise area (which there was none made available to them at any of the facilities), you have further unhappiness. If, at bedtime, they're name-called again, you have an unhappy child going off to sleep. If you have a police officer who, himself, is lacking in integrity, in good moral character, and that officer has a physical relationship with the child in jail, you have harmed the child to a degree that almost nothing can change his or her attitude.

There was a little fourteen-year-old girl held in the Reno city jail, who, more than a year after having been released from the jail, told the story of an officer using her sexually, normally and abnormally. This same child told of being slapped around by the same officer. The child told the story of a second officer joining with the first officer and engaging in this same kind of practice.

I can tell, the story of a young teenage boy being brought by a juvenile police officer into the basement of the building, of being taken out of the car by this officer, and being knocked down, of being hit by the officer's fists, of being backhanded, who, while being physically abused by this officer, was told that no wonder he was the no good bastard that he was because every officer in town knew that his mother was a prostitute, and that if it wasn't that he had to turn the boy over to the probation department, that he'd paint the basement with him. But he couldn't go that far, but there would be another opportunity when the officer would be able to get to him again. And the next time that he had to arrest him, he'd fix him so even his probation officer wouldn't recognize him.

It so happened, too, that the mother of this boy not only was not a prostitute, she was a housewife. The only criticism that the police officer—and it wouldn't have been a legitimate criticism—the only thing he could

have said about her was that she had been married twice, and that she had been divorced twice, and at that time was going with a man whom she did later marry, and it was a third marriage. But none of that was any of the officer's business, and most certainly he had no right to stand in judgment. Also, I became very much better acquainted with this mother than the officer did, and I was able to learn and did know and can say in all honesty that she was a very good mother, a very good person.

I can also tell that at that same time of having to stand near the booking desk and watch two officers book a prostitute. (I personally knew her to be a prostitute in the community.) I watched those two officers beat that woman with their fists. I watched them beat her about the breasts. I watched them beat her about the stomach. And I watched them knee—use their knees with her in the private area. I watched them physically abuse her with their clubs in the rectal area. I watched them hit her across the hips, across the calves of her legs. I watched them beat her on her feet. I know that they had mistreated her before they ever got to the jail because she was bleeding from the mouth and the nose as she got to the booking desk. I also watched them jerk her right and left by her hair. I was also told by the two officers at the time that if I opened my mouth to anyone at any time about what happened and what I saw that someone would pick me up out of an abandoned mine shaft, or I would float down the Truckee River to the Pyramid Lake area. They weren't kidding, and I knew it.

Another incident at the Reno police station—there was a little Indian boy from the Colony being held. At the time he was eleven years of age. He was one of a group who had taken some beer from a market, and a bottle of wine, and they did drink the beer, they did drink the wine, they had stolen it. There was no



question about the facts in the case at all. The youngsters all admitted it. But this was about the fourth or fifth arrest for this particular Indian boy, and when I discussed the case with the judge, he did request that I file the petition and bring the child and his mother to court for a juvenile court hearing. Generally the youngsters did have a number of days in jail, and when the mother was told that her son would have to be there for a number of days, this one day when she got off work at Washoe Medical where she was an aide, she did walk from Washoe Medical Center to the Reno City Jail, and she went up the elevator to the booking desk. She gave the booking officer a little red imitation leather coin purse. She had put in the purse sixty-five cents; two quarters, a dime, and a nickel. This money was to be used by her son in the candy vending machine. The booking officer took the coin purse and the sixty-five cents. I think that is an example of how small a human being can be where children are involved.

That same mother had terminal cancer. All individuals working with the family knew that she had cancer. And yet, another day, when she was in the Reno city jail, she was cussed out and told to get out of the building, that she'd been there the day before, and by God, she'd better not come back for another week, that they were getting sick and tired of seeing her fade in that building. That's another example of an individual being in police work who had no compassion for people, no understanding, and, of course, no training. That is another very good example of why so many people hate police officers, and why many people have no respect whatsoever for police officers. And, of course, I had not only no respect for the police officers that I have described in these incidents, I had, really, a deep hatred for those officers.

At the same time, we have had and do have police officers in this community who

could work in any police department in the world and do a fine job, and who are fine men, and men of integrity. Of all the officers I've worked with over the years, no man better typifies the very real gentleman than William Brodhead. And there have, fortunately for this community, been a lot of officers of similar integrity and honesty, who are men with compassion and feeling and do know how to work with people. Some of them work very well who have not had the advantage of academic learning, but they've been sufficiently interested to teach themselves and to study, and who know how, without academic training, to get along with people and to help people.

Assistant Chief Brodhead and I worked together for about a five-year period with many cases. I watched the tone and the philosophy in the Reno police department change, and always for the better, because of William Brodhead's influence. Though I was never present to hear him discuss police work or cases with his fellow officers, I did learn from other officers that, because of his thinking and because of his talking with them and because of his conduct, that he was influencing others always for the better. More than any other single individual, I will give Officer Brodhead the credit (and, of course, eventually, he had the responsibility for personnel) for the change of philosophy within the department. I will give that one individual most of the credit. Now, others contributed to the good things as well. Through some pretty strenuous years, I'll give practically all of the credit to William Brodhead.

#### **PROBATION WORK WITH CHILDREN OF RACIAL MINORITIES**

Minorities. Washoe County never has had, nor does it have now, large numbers

of peoples classified as minority groups. We have the Washo and the Paiute and the Shoshone Indians, and not too many of them. We have a number of the blacks, but not a large number. We had more when the Stead Air Force Base was in operation. We do have black families that have lived here for a long time. We do have more of the newcomers into the community. Over the years, of course, I would have to say that, apparently, the parents of the black youngsters in this area, because of, or in spite of, or anything else, they would certainly know as well as we that Nevada has been a Jim Crow state, and they would know that there were employment handicaps in the area, and we do have segregation in the area, also. But at the same time, these parents apparently, on the whole, made every effort to provide as good a home and as good a home environment as it was possible for them to do because we did not have, ever, any out of proportion to numbers of referrals—in fact, generally far less than you would have thought we would have had. And I don't think it's any different now than it's ever been. We had very, very few of the black children referred to us.

I remember when there was so much conversation about pot or grass, and people would make generalizations, "Well, I suppose you get most of the black youngsters out of Traner," or, "I suppose" (after Hug opened) "a lot of your youngsters are the blacks from Hug." I won't say that maybe some of them at Traner weren't smoking pot, and I won't say that there weren't probably some at Hug that were smoking pot, but none of them were being arrested for using drugs or smoking pot.

The Indian youngsters had more than their proper ratio of referrals for curfew, for truancy, for shoplifting, for malicious mischief. But at the same time, the Indian youngsters, on the whole, were as well behaved in this community as any other

group, a lot of them probably better behaved. Even though a lot of the homes are referred to as shacks and hovels, you can live in a shack with good parents, and you can receive love and affection. You also can receive good food and proper care and everything else. The majority of the families of the Indian Colony or residing in the area have done and are doing a good job. The generalizations in the area were, if the children were from the Colony, why, you had to lock your doors. If they were in stores, you had to especially watch, more than others. But actually, when we got right down to cases, it was a small percentage, just like the number of adults in and out of the Reno jail for drunkenness were a very, very small percentage.

There were youngsters known to the department in their early years and in their teens, who, today, are just as successful in their own personal lives as the white children in this area. They are fathers and mothers living in the Colony and functioning in the best interest of the community, just as do some of the white community leaders. In fact, I've said it before, but I'll say it again, too: I don't know of any better citizen than John Dressler was when he was living on Reservation Road. The Reverend Clyde Mathews would concur with me that where it was necessary for us to do considerable planning to get these youngsters into some activities that they were happy in, that it took a lot of time and effort, and we used to have to, probably, watch much more closely that these youngsters were getting three meals a day, and that they did have clothes that they could wear to school.

I think we handled most of them more as you would dependent and/or neglected children, yet they weren't really being neglected and dependent, as far as their own culture was concerned. As I have been told—and I guess it is part of the culture—when



these youngsters get into their teens, the parents consider them as adults and perfectly capable of making their own decisions. If they want to quit school, why, okay. It's part of the pattern. So, quite often, our jobs, really, were to encourage the parents, too, to, in turn, encourage their children, because of the white culture, to get an education, stay in school as long as they would.

It's certainly no secret in this community, either, it's much more difficult for an Indian boy or girl to find employment here than it is for a white child, even though conditions have improved some recently, and more of them are having better and more employment partly through job training programs.

I would say that this county has never had any special problem with the minority children. We have practically no Orientals. We have had some oriental children in custody, and some youngsters whose mothers were oriental and the fathers were GI's, where the mothers were brought to this community by white husbands to reside. And we've even had a couple of Eskimo children in Wittenberg Hall who were either with their own parents or with adopting parents, or, again, with a military relationship of some kind. They're always a very small percentage. But, too, if you get five or six Indian youngsters at one time in Wittenberg Hall, it would seem like it's a large proportion. But it never was. I can say the same nice things about Indian parents as I can say for whites. I can also be critical and criticize some Indian parents for some of the same things as you would be critical of white or Caucasian parents.

I remember one Indian mother who had three boys and who worked very diligently and very regularly and to the best of her ability to support those youngsters, and kept right on even when she knew that she had cancer, continued working until she could no longer

work at Washoe Medical. She was working there as an aide in the last part of her life.

He did take more baskets of foods and goodies in proportion to population to the Colony, but a lot of these large families needed a hand with food. We've helped probably more black families in proportion, again, with clothes and food. But also, again, with large families, and maybe just the mother employed, it was necessary to give a hand. And all those people were of the needy, in contrast to the problem today in welfare, with the greedy.

We have very few of the Mexican-Americans in the area. Back at the time of the pachuco, we would have runaway Mexican Americans from other areas. Occasionally we would have a local youngster in custody, but there just aren't very many here, as I say.

In Wittenberg Hall, children are children, all of them, and what nationality they might be has nothing to do with anything, except that I think probably all of us would go just a little bit farther in every way for a minority youngster than for a white so that we were being helpful in every way we could be. We've been accused of prejudices, but generally, when faced with facts, we could back the complaining parent down, or whoever made the accusation. The black youngster who was told at home that Whitey was okay would come in with a chip on his shoulder. But where many urban areas have their very real problems with minority groups, this community has never had [them], as far as the probation department was concerned.

Oh, yes. I have nothing but admiration for—. Along with Clyde Mathews, who those many years was at the Colony and working sincerely every day of the world to help those people, there were individuals in the community and in the schools doing the same thing in their capacity. One that was

outstanding in her interest and devotion to the Indian children was the principal of the antis Ring School for many years, Grace Warner. She went far beyond the call of duty to make the youngsters feel at home and welcome and then to give them the best possible education in that school. And I think that Grace would be the first to admit, too, that a lot of her interest came because of the Indian youngsters' interest in art, in drawing and painting. And Grace herself, who is an artist, and I know is painting today in the San Francisco area where she's living, encouraged a lot of the youngsters to paint, to draw, and encouraged their parents and older brothers and sisters, too. They didn't have to be in her school for her to be interested in them.

Darrell Swope, who, for a long time was at Northside, and then when he went to E. Otis Vaughn Junior High, was very much interested in the Indian youngster. I couldn't name them all, but a lot of the teachers in this area made special effort to be friends with and be helpful to the youngsters of minority races, including the Indian children.

#### **EXPLAINING PROBATION TO THE COMMUNITY**

I feel very strongly about a subject that I'd like to include today, and that is that the public per se really do not understand, necessarily, the functions of the probation departments or the functions of some of the institutions for children. For example, locally, all of the twenty years that I was in the probation department, I was always learning that people really didn't know what the boys' school was, and after Wittenberg Hall was built, people would make the kind of remark, "Well, now that you have your own school for boys, you will not have to be committing boys to the boys' school near Elko," people in the community that did not

know that Wittenberg Hall was coeducational, that we held both boys and girls. They didn't understand, when they would call on the phone and want one of the staff to come immediately to pick up a youngster at home who was misbehaving, that the service wasn't available that way, that we would [not] send someone immediately to pick up the child and bring him to Wittenberg Hall, especially if they were referring to a seven-year-old, or a six-year- or a five-year-old child, because, to begin with, you may not detain in the detention home a child under the age of eight. If a child under that age (and there are those that must be held, or must have a change of environment), you place them in foster homes, you don't put them in a detention home. They're too young to properly fit into the kind of program in operation.

In this area, there are many people, including police officers, who, when a child was arrested, believed that the solution was how are you going to punish the child? What are you going to do to, t-o, the child, rather than for, f-o-r, the child? That's really their thinking. The child has committed an offense. He's broken a law. He's stolen a car, or he's stolen hub caps, or he's broken into a school. Or he's taken a six-pack of beer out of the store. Then they want to know what we are going to do to the child. I may not be wording this the best way in the world, but you'd be amazed as to how prevalent that kind of thinking is in a community. Because it's not just in the Reno area; it's in every area. Because in talking to probation officers and people—institutional people, and at regional conferences, and at national conferences, you would hear the same stories, a probation officer saying, "One of the most serious problems that I have in my community in public relations is the desire of the people to want something done to the child." With the

institutions, they see in conjunction with this thinking that you will get rid of this problem by putting the child somewhere else.

I don't think that I was ever very successful in convincing some of the law enforcement officials in this area with my argument; that, do you realize the child will be out of your hair for a period of time? That is true. But in practically all instances, that child is going to return to this very same community. And just because he's been at an institution doesn't mean that when he comes back into the area that he's no longer going to be arrested. In fact, you are more apt to have a youngster better educated in a wrongdoing, or, if you want to word it this way, in law breaking and criminal activities, Tie use criminal in conjunction with adults, primarily, but these youngsters are involved, too, in criminal activities. Burglary is a criminal activity. Grand theft auto is a criminal activity, car theft, all the rest of it. But it was very, very difficult to convince them that hopefully, we might work with the child here and help him to adjust and to stop certain activities, rather than send him to a school where he can't help his association with the other boys, quite possibly associating with much more sophisticated delinquents than his companions locally.

A girl who is running away rather frequently might not necessarily have other problems. She might just have the problem within her home where she is unable to resolve the problem except, in her own mind, to run to escape it. All right, placing that child in an institution, you can expose her to more serious problems, or problems in addition to the ones she already has. Well, if after a period of a year or a year and a half or two years you return her from the institution to the same home that she was taken from (and that's done very often), then you probably will have more problems with

that girl in the community than you ever had before she was institutionalized. I think that it's very, very tragic, where, really, the child becomes a victim of official planning. He'd have to have problems, or he'd never get to court and be committed. If you give him the additional problem of having been exposed to homosexual activities, you really haven't done too much for that child. I've never been able to reconcile that possibility in my thinking. People will say, "Well, the child certainly doesn't have to participate if he doesn't want to." That isn't true. There are cases where they do have to participate whether they want to or not. They are forced to do things. And boys, of course, can be raped as well as girls. Those things happen.

So, without saying it in a way that it's a criticism of the school, what I'm trying to explain, really, is that people think of the schools as a cure or as a panacea, where they're not, and they can't be, and they probably never will be. They are part of a total program, hopefully with some kind of rehabilitation for the period of time the child is there. But when you want to use the words "to cure" a problem, or to solve it, or to do away with it, you're still probably, in the long run, going to do a better job right in the community where the child lives, where he has a family. If [the] family's pretty good—a family can even be pretty poor; sometimes a pretty poor family can be better than a good institution for some children.

I have personally been in court where the youngsters were declared totally dependent, that the parental rights would be terminated by court action, where the child was no longer to be placed under their supervision or in their control or in their home. And yet, on leaving the courtroom, the child, where this action has been taken, supposedly for him, would scream and cry and drag his

feet, leaving with the officer of the court, and couldn't leave with the mother or the father or the stepmother or the stepfather or the older brother or sister or a grandparent or someone of his own family.

A youngster could be in court, and not necessarily because of an incident of being a battered child. He probably was in court with a different petition. It might show in the child's history for the court that he was rather infrequently or rather frequently physically abused or mentally abused by the parents. But he might also be in court, still, with the evidences of a black eye or a broken nose, or teeth missing in the front of his mouth, or a hand in a sling, or something like that, and still, that child would prefer to leave the court with family members rather than with officers of the court. Also, I have found that youngsters separated—well, like when the court would commit girls to the Good Shepherd Home in Helena, Montana. Helena's a long ways from Washoe County. A lot of these families would not be able to afford plane or train or bus tickets to Helena, or even make the long distance calls. So, except for an occasional letter (and maybe some of these parents didn't write letters, either), you really are taking children away from, even though, by philosophy, you're supposed to be building up family relationships. It would work out to be that you were breaking up, rather than building to.

Also, in months of absence, there seemed to be a tendency with so many of these youngsters—and I don't know if it's an honest, true generalization or not, but I'll say that there seemed to be a tendency with these youngsters to forget the things that we would call "bad" in the background or home situation, and to remember the "good." They would remember that their mother did bake a birthday cake at their last birthday. They

wouldn't necessarily remember that before the day was over, they might've gotten a damn good beating, too. But they would remember that the mother did bake a birthday cake. Now, they might forget, or have it very dim in their memory, that Mother left with a boyfriend and was gone for six days to San Francisco or Sacramento, or Portland, or somewhere. Yet they might remember that, "Mother brought me back six model planes," or, "Mother brought me back that big stuffed toy." Or, "When Mother came back, she gave me five dollars." Or, "Mother let me go to the show every day I asked." Well, they'll remember. So there's still a lot of education necessary for people in our communities to understand, actually, what our departments do, what they're supposed to do, and what our institutions do do.

Now, I would venture a guess right now that even though Wittenberg Hall, our county detention facility, has been in operation a little more than ten years (it was ten years on the twenty-seventh of February of 1911 that it opened for children), that far less than a half of one percent of the residents of this county have ever bothered to take the time to go over to Wittenberg Hall on Mill Street and ask to see the facility. Now, I might be wrong in that there could be more than a half of one percent that have been in the building because of parents accompanying their youngsters with traffic citations. A lot of youngsters and parents get into that building because of traffic offenses. But I mean those people who were actually interested enough to go over to the facility to ask to see it. Since I've taken my new position, people still call me about probation matters, and just recently a woman called me and wanted to know if her daughter could be held at Wittenberg Hall for a year, rather than have her go to a state institution. People just are not sufficiently familiar with what goes

on. Just like in this area, the families have problems, and they don't know which way to turn. They don't know whom to ask. And it's a sad situation. It isn't a criticism; it's just a sad situation.

You and I discussed the other day a situation where a family squabble occurred near your home, and you wondered, "Just who should C call?" well, why would you necessarily know who to call if there's a family fight taking place? There's no particular reason for you to have to know. Or there's no particular reason for you to know that if a burglary is committed, that such and such takes place, or if you commit an offense and it's a felony and if conviction follows that you don't serve it in a jail, you serve it in a prison. Most people just aren't exposed to it and don't have to be that well informed.

And then, of course, we have many, many people who aren't informed because they aren't interested enough to be informed. They'll criticize and knock things where they live, but they don't make any effort to improve the situation, or offer to assist with a change. You'll notice that even at election times. People will go to the polls to vote, and in a general election, statewide, they may vote for their choice of governor and lieutenant governor and maybe the United States Senate and the House of Representatives, and those are the only votes they'll cast. Or someone else may go to the polls and they'll vote just for one individual, a friend of theirs. Someone else'll go because they're interested or have a personal beef; they'll go to vote against somebody. And very many people do not vote for all of the offices on a ballot. Of course, sometimes they aren't informed, and they don't know about it, and as we get larger and larger ballots, it makes the problem more difficult. Put they really aren't, I think, in lots of cases, interested enough to find

out about, to really know, and then to vote intelligently, So there's a lot of different facets of the whole deal. But there is a lot of, really, just not knowing about things, and then even if they know about things, being willing to do something about it.



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## CASE WORK IN THE WASHOE COUNTY JUVENILE PROBATION OFFICE

### PHILOSOPHY ON CASE WORK

Mr. Charles Nichols, who had the office officially before my appointment, had been very ill for a number of years, and just prior to my taking office, Mr. Emile Gezelin, a local attorney, was helping. Mr. Nichols was not physically able to do many things the last number of years, so actually, the office really wasn't functioning. Mr. Gezelin took care of emergency situations. So actually, when we talk about it, it was almost like starting all over, with the juvenile code, of course, adopted that year [1949]. I realized very quickly, when I did start in the office, that different individuals in the community, who were involved with certain problems with children, all had very preconceived ideas of what the probation department was to be and what it should be, and unless it were conducted or handled in just that manner, that the person that was named probation officer just wasn't doing the job, or starting out correctly.

Before I ever accepted the position, I had made it very, very clear to the [probation]

committee that I was interested in the position if the committee was interested in my philosophy, and that I wouldn't be able to work except with the philosophy that I had been working with for years with children. And then, of course, the law specifically spells it out, anyway, as just so happened to be in accordance with my own philosophy, and that is that your premise for the entire function of the department would be that "the probation officer or officers would confine their activities to those things that would be of assistance to the child, his family, and the community." But primarily, my philosophy, which was accepted by the committee, (was] that I would function to be of assistance to the child, primarily. Because if you are of assistance to the child, you almost automatically (at least, in most cases) are being of assistance to his parents. And if you are assisting the child and his parents, again, you would almost automatically be of assistance to your community. It is a kind of dual role, by statute, this assisting the child and assisting the community.



If a child is, for example, involved in burglaries of homes, to apprehend the child immediately helps protect the community, but also, you must be able to do something which is of assistance to the child so that he won't return to that same activity in the community. Of course, children can appear in court, the judge can grant them probation, they can be released to their parents, they do have a probation officer assigned for counseling and assistance, and still the child may return to, again, burglarizing homes in the community. Well, with that kind of illustration, too, you would know, definitely, that what you were doing apparently was not working out successfully and you would have to reorganize your thinking and plans and approach the problem differently. For many years, for many people in this community, that meant, "Lock them up."

Well, as strongly as I feel about being of assistance to the child, I feel just as strongly about being of assistance to the child in the community where he lives, and that sending him away or locking him up, where it might be of assistance to a degree, it isn't generally good planning, and I was always much more comfortable working with the child within the community, where I was working with the child, his parents, the school, and where it was a kind of "team" approach. Where we live is what's important to us, and—well, that was my philosophy, and that's what I tried to do.

I started out by saying that there were others in the community who had a different philosophy and very different thinking about what the probation department was to be and should be. There were those in law enforcement who, when the child was apprehended, wanted the probation department to be a kind of middle man, who would file the legal document, the petition, and take the child to court. The child would

have a court appearance, and then the judge would commit to an institution.

Well, as you know, probation is giving the child an opportunity to do differently, rather than going the route that the law enforcement people wanted to go, of just apprehend, have a hearing, and ship out. So there was considerable opposition to my making recommendations of a probation program. There were some individuals in the school system with a very similar philosophy, who explained that they had, over a considerable period of time, been tolerating this child in the school system, and did not want him (or her), and they wanted the probation department to remove the child from the school system. That would generally infer institutional placement. There were people in the community who felt that there should be a "get tough" attitude established because of those years where they believed nothing had been done in the probation department to help them with their problems.

A number of situations had developed which were at a critical stage—where the child continued to reside here but continued to flout the law, or continued to cut school, or continued to violate curfew and continued to get drunk, and continued to do many things. And these individuals, like the people who lived across the street from this boy, or at the end of the block, or the man who owned the little corner grocery nearby—they wanted something done about this child and his family. There were families who were receiving some financial assistance from one agency or another in the community. They wanted something done about these problem families.

I did encounter considerable opposition when they learned I wanted to study the situation, and that I would need time to become informed in order to make proper

recommendations. They all wanted something done “right now.” That was a handicap. But I did, because I had the support of the committee, start out slowly, carefully, cautiously, and most certainly not wanting to annihilate the assistance of other groups, and I did want to establish working relationships with other agencies. And I most certainly wanted to get along with school personnel. As the children were held in the jails, I most certainly wanted to get along with law enforcement. But, as I say, it was very difficult because we all had these conflicting thoughts as to what should or could be done.

I did, as I say, work slowly, and after the first few weeks, I did not file a petition and take a child to court, and did not include a recommendation for the court unless I felt that I had just about all of the facts that could be obtained. For example, a case can get very complicated. A family might be in our community for a year or two or three, and yet, what was very important to know was the fact that they had lived in Sacramento before moving to Reno and were known to the probation department there. (We needed] to learn what services were offered there, how the family reacted to those offered services, what the boy’s attitude was in the public schools in that community. Or some of these youngsters might have been here for a year or two, but might have come here from an institution in another state. California, our neighboring state, furnishes a lot of the population in this area. I found that it was very helpful to know this because many of the California communities had services that we did not have. For example, a child might’ve had a very detailed psychiatric and psychological study done in one of the California communities. Probation departments are, with the consent of the court, able to forward confidential information.

Well, quite often, too, parents would move to this community, thinking they were giving their child a new start, and it might’ve even been recommended by the probation department in the community where they lived. They wouldn’t come here and tell the school people of the problems that they’d had in another area. They just enrolled the child in the school and then hoped for the best.

Possibly the child was behind in his schoolwork, or maybe enrolled in a more permissive school situation in California and here found our more academic setting difficult to succeed in, or maybe he was in the sixth grade in another community, and that particular sixth grade was considerably ahead of what he was doing here. Well, then, frustrated in the school situation here, he might react as he did before, shoplifting downtown, violating curfew, being a troublemaker in school, maybe stealing in school, or all of those things.

I knew that it was very important that I have background information, and because we had, even in ’49, moved considerably into the area of mobile population in this country, sometimes I’d have to check out half a dozen communities. It takes time for correspondence to be returned.

I was able, fortunately, to establish, or have an acceptance of the philosophy of “being of assistance to the child” accepted in the community. It took longer in some areas than in others, but by degrees, other agencies and other individuals did accept the premise on which we were basing our work in the probation department. Once we were able to show that you could do something with probation, rather than just using the department to send people away, they were willing to be more cooperative. I’m very grateful to be able to say that overall, in the next eighteen years, or even nineteen years,

we had the very best of cooperation from practically all of the agencies and groups in the community, and almost all individuals. Where they didn't necessarily see eye to eye with us in the probation department, they did accept enough. We didn't necessarily see eye to eye with them on everything, but we certainly were able to work well together. We could sit down in a conference; a law enforcement official, a school official, a probation official, and work out some of the difficulties that the community was having with certain families.

### **DEALING WITH NEWS MEDIA**

I do believe that almost anyone who might have been appointed to the position of probation officer in Washoe County in 1949 would've had some of the same problems because it wasn't as much a matter of personality; it was a matter of philosophy. We had problems with our local papers. They wanted to publish names because it was news. Even though, by statute, you may not publish the name of a child under eighteen years of age in the state of Nevada, except with the consent of the court, the newspapers continually wanted to do so and would argue with me the merits of publishing or not publishing, stating that "people needed to know for their protection which can, in some cases, have some merit. But at the same time, I took an oath to obey the law, and the Nevada statutes then and now state that you shall not publish names of children under the age of eighteen except by consent of the court. The newspapers just never gave me any peace of mind with anything and with almost any of the youngsters for a long period of time. It did change when they learned that I wasn't going to give in and there wasn't new legislation that was changing the law. Whether they liked it or not, they did accept the tact, and they did get off my back, so to speak. For the last number

of years—in fact, I think from the time that Wittenberg Hall opened, the press was really a friend to the department, and they gave us great assistance for good articles and good publicity for the children and the department, rather than approaching it from the negative, of publishing names. There were individuals willing to accept my explanation that, for example, if there were several children in a family and one youngster was involved with the law and with the probation department, then giving that child the publicity would reflect on the other children in the family, and the parents as well.

I remember telling a reporter of the case of a boy who had been a student at Reno High School and who became involved with the law, and was committed to the boys' school (which was then the Nevada School of Industry near Elko), and because it became public knowledge, his two younger sisters, who were also students at Reno High School, were unable to stay in school and finally both were dropouts, just because of pressures.

It was very, very difficult to work out good programs if the facts of the case became public knowledge. Generally, it wasn't that the community had the facts; they had a distortion of the facts. The child might have been involved in a home burglary, and the child might have been involved in the theft of an automobile, but by the time the story spread throughout the community, they had made up stories about his involvement in abnormal sex activities, or possibly in a rape case, or this, that, or the other. It was not factual, and those things are very difficult to fight in trying to help a child.

Some states have passed legislation, and today they do publish the names. There was a judge in Helena, Montana, a Judge [Lester H.] Loble, who received a lot of nationwide publicity because he published the names

of juvenile offenders and then claimed that his statistics proved that it was beneficial to the community to publish the names. And yet, when the National Council on Crime and Delinquency sent one of their staff into Montana to do a study to find out the facts, this staff member could not obtain accurate information and! or statistics from Judge Loble. Not only were they publishing things that were not true, they were publishing and he was furnishing facts that were just plain, unadulterated lies. So it was, in a sense, a hoax upon the community and the country.

People pick up a newspaper, or they're listening to the radio, or they're watching TV, and they hear that Judge Loble is doing fine things in his community by publishing names. Well, what's the matter? Why doesn't the probation department here encourage the publishing of the names? It would help us if we had that protection.

That sort of thing, I guess, will always go on when you have a clash of philosophies. But there's another thing, very basic, with it, too. I don't think that two wrongs make a right. I don't think that if you are working as a professional, and that you are working with confidential information, and also, if you're working to be of assistance to people, that you ever could possibly help a child if you embarrassed or humiliated his parent. There are many who believe that if you publish the names, then the parents will see to it that their children don't get into more difficulties. That just isn't true. Also, there are youngsters who would like very much to have their names in the paper. It gives them further status with their peer group. They would cut out the articles, pack them in their wallet, pass the articles around. In their eyes, the publicity makes them "big."

Actually, the newspaper reporters can attend juvenile court hearings, although

they've even published statements to the contrary. They can. They can publish the facts of juvenile cases, only, by law, they are not to identify the child by name. If a youngster has been responsible for a number of offenses in the community, or several youngsters have been involved in a kind of gang activity in the community, those things can be published, and factually. The probation department, with the consent of the court, would see to it that the reporter had the facts in the case. The only restriction, because of the statutes, they could not reveal the child's name or address, or parents' name or employment, or those things that can identify. Juvenile court hearings are confidential, not secret. In all of the twenty years that I was in the probation department, I never ever read anything or heard of anything functioning in any other community that would've made me ever want to recommend to the legislature that we publish the names. Where it has been tried, it has been proven very unsuccessful, both for the child, for the family, and for the community. So until I would learn differently, why, I did stand pat on that premise.

Referring again to the family where the brother and two sisters were at Reno High School, it was primarily because of the adverse publicity and pressures at school from some of the faculty and some of the students that the girls dropped out of school. Without employment and time on their hands, they got into difficulty with a couple of the theaters for sneaking into a movie without a ticket. They were at a later date apprehended in several of the downtown stores for shoplifting. When these things became known to their parents and the parents were trying to help them at home, there were words, and finally the two girls ran away. They were apprehended the first time in Colfax [California] and were brought back to the probation department.

Because we didn't have a sufficient number of foster homes at the time, we didn't have foster placement available for them, they went back into the home. There was the matter of minor offenses and enough antisocial activity that went on with those girls that eventually one became pregnant and was placed by another agency in an out-of-state institution; her child was placed for adoption. She returned to this community and worked for a little while as a carhop. Within that first year of her return, she was pregnant again. This time, she wasn't about to go to an institution; she was going to stay at home, and she was going to have her baby, and keep her baby. She did stay at home, and she did have her baby here, and she did keep the baby. She stayed around the area for about another year and then took off with a boy in the military. She left this baby with her parents, so that the parents then had a second family to raise. They weren't too well equipped to handle the problems they had without additional responsibilities being handed to them. That is a good example of what can happen to a family when things become of public knowledge.

All of the family became involved because the boy did go to the boys' school. Eventually, the compounded problems caused the parents to separate. They did not divorce, but they separated. They went back together again. At a later period of time, they separated for more than a year, multiplying the total problem that much more. He didn't make sufficient money to maintain two households. I believe the couple had a very fine basic relationship, and I think that they really suffered physically and mentally to be apart. After the second separation, they did go back together, things having smoothed out somewhat, and they still live in this community. And [to] the best of my knowledge, it's a good marriage right now. At least they saved their marriage and they are

together. Of course, it ended up, too, that they are raising one of their grandchildren, and I think that's sad, that it had to be that way, where it wasn't of their own choice.

### **HAIR, LONG OR SHORT**

It's rather strange what will and what will not get parents and communities concerned. For example, I remember in the early '50's, parents became terribly concerned as [to] what was referred to in the newspapers as "the pachuco type," and the "pachukes," and the "pachuco" gangs. You recall that the hair style was duck tails, worn rather long in the back, with high pompadours and fancy hair combing. If it was really pachuco style, there were duck tails down over the collar. Now, today, we have hair again being one of the issues in which many people get very concerned because you can't tell the boys from the girls, from the hair styles." A lot of the boys do have long hair, down to their shoulders, and some of them have pony tails. But people—well, not only the parents, but school officials and school principals get very excited about it, and a youngster will not be able to attend a particular school unless his hair conforms to the particular standard of that school. We had pressure at Wittenberg Hall, too, to cut the long hair when these youngsters were brought in.

Well, my personal opinion is—and was at the time of the pachucos, too—hair style is a personal matter, and if the child wanted a haircut, it would be cut as he requested. If the parents requested a haircut, the child would get a haircut. In many communities, if officials get a child in custody, one of the first things they do is cut their hair. I think it is a violation of individual rights, and I think that civil rights groups have every reason to protest that kind of attitude.



The pachucos received all kinds of criticism from the press, as the hippies do today. At the time we were working with the pachucos and their particular clothes styles (the chains, and the tight cuffs, and the leather jackets), we couldn't help remembering that when we were in school there were particular styles. Again recently, when they started talking about and criticizing the bell-bottomed trousers, I recalled that when I was in college, some of us wore bellbottomed trousers, and the wider the better. It was an deal.

There have been a lot of cases where we never really could resolve this problem of cutting hair to everyone's satisfaction, and least of all, the child. But what we would generally try to do was have the parents make the decision because it is their child and their responsibility. When the school was not going to accept the youngster back into school, or would [not] allow him back in the classroom unless he got a haircut, we would generally encourage the parents to have the child get the haircut to enable his return to school. I don't recall any case where I ever told a child that he had to get his hair cut. I would tell him that it would be better for him because of certain circumstances, either for school or for employment, if he did get the haircut. And if he absolutely refused, and the parents didn't encourage him, and he was suspended from school, why, then, that was his problem to work out. If At meant that he could not get the particular job he wanted if he refused to cut his hair, he just had to look for other employment because employers have that right, too, of determining whether they will or will not hire according to certain rules. If the school adopts a rule, then the child has to make his own decision, as the parents have to make their own decision as to whether they wilt observe the rule or not. Just because

you have children in custody doesn't mean that you have the right to do certain things, because you don't.

During the last number of months that I was at Wittenberg Hall, we had a large number of boys with long hair. We would insist that they must keep their hair clean for good hygienic reasons. We did, with both the boys and girls, insist, too, that they not have the hair in their eyes. The reason that we made that request was because there were youngsters who did have eye infections because of dirty hair and the tip of the hair brushing against the eye. We insisted on cleanliness, but it wasn't directed to make a hassle out of the long hair. We insisted on cleanliness in every single facet of the homemaking at Wittenberg Hall.

#### **THIEVERY AND SHOPLIFTING**

A lot of youngsters are arrested each year for offenses that we in the probation department consider more as minor offenses. For example, youngsters are arrested, and the offense is listed as "It malicious mischief." For example, several youngsters on their way to school spot a couple of quarts of milk on a front porch. Maybe it comes about through a dare, or maybe it comes about because they didn't have breakfast and they're thirsty. Anyway, they take the two quarts of milk. Going by another house, they notice flowers blooming in a flower bed right near the walk, so they pick a bouquet for a favorite teacher at school. Or they go by a home and there's a tricycle sitting on the front lawn, so they take the tricycle with them and take it all the way to school and leave it out on the parking lot. Or they're in one of the stores on the way to school and they're buying soft drinks or candy or gum or getting cigarettes out of a cigarette machine, and one or more neglect to pay

for some of the articles that they have when they leave the store. That is shoplifting, it is a petty theft offense, and they are stealing. Or after school, a group of girls are downtown and there are several in a store together, and one of them decides that she needs a pair of nylons, so she steals them. Or she's attracted to some costume jewelry, so she takes a ring from the case on the counter.

Or, sometimes their shoplifting gets to be rather extensive, and even quite professional. I can remember, especially when the skirts were longer, that they would go into the stores and walk out with two or three skirts on, that they would put costume jewelry or things in their bras, or they might even go as far as, in one shopping expedition, to take a pair of capris, a blouse, a sweater, a pair of Keds. Some of the girls actually become very professional in their shoplifting activities.

Boys do a lot of shoplifting, as well as the girls. But the boys were more apt to, like after school, go into a store and take cookies or crackers Foodstuffs. And then they might, too, go in a record shop and steal records. They might go into a store and steal something that they need because they're building, say, a model plane, or a model train. They need more parts and they don't have the money, so they go steal a kit of these parts.

The girls, some of them, would shoplift and would admit to us, after the arrest, that they'd been shoplifting for a year, or they'd been shoplifting for two years, or they had been shoplifting off and on for three years; this was the first time that they had been caught. Or they hadn't been shoplifting in this community, but they'd been shoplifting in another community, that when they went to Sacramento, -or example, shopping with their parents, they'd shoplift there. Some of them shoplifted for gifts for a boyfriend or girlfriend. Some of them shoplifted to buy

friendship at school. They didn't keep any of the things that they stole for themselves but gave them to their friends. The shoplifting generally picked up in November, and in December, and very considerably before the Christmas holidays. And we've even made facetious remarks in the department about "the children doing their Christmas shoplifting early this year."

I personally got involved one Christmas with shoplifting activities. One youngster brought me a pen and pencil set, all nicely wrapped and with a nice card. Another youngster brought me a desk set that I knew was very expensive and I knew that he could not have purchased it. I inquired of the several local stationery stores, and it was stolen from Mr. Armanko's store, and Mr. Armanko, as you know, was one of the probation committee members. So the stolen merchandise, or the Christmas gifts, were [laughing] returned to their proper owners.

I used to get very unhappy at the time the state basketball tournaments were used in our area because CI thought— and still do—that they were one of the finest events that we have all year for our young people. I personally enjoy the basketball games, and I would encourage anything and everything of good activities at tournament time for youngsters) some of the youngsters from other communities would get involved in shoplifting, and a number would be apprehended. At one state basketball tournament, there were several girls together from another larger community in this state. When the police did go to the motel room and got to checking, they found several hundred dollars worth of clothing, records, costume jewelry, etc.

I remember one Christmas vacation period when I went with one of the police officers into a home. The girl (on probation to me) was keeping things that the other girls had



shoplifted, as well as what she had shoplifted. By the time the mother went through dresser drawers for the police, opened the closet door (I remember some of the prices), there was an eighty-dollar suede jacket hanging on the coat hanger and the price tag still on it; there were a half a dozen cashmere sweaters, the price tags still hanging on them; there were a half dozen skirts, price tags still intact; a couple of coats, a lot of lingerie, a lot of nylon hose. In that particular case there was more than eight hundred dollars worth of shoplifted articles. Of course, most of the articles we were able to return to the owners. But lots of times, by the time we got through checking, the clothes had changed hands maybe two or three or four times, or they didn't know where they were any more, or they were ruined. Sometimes the youngsters were able to make restitution; sometimes they weren't able to make restitution.

I can give you an example, too, of a seven-year-old who was brought to the office for shoplifting, and by the time I had finished talking to the youngster and he had calmed down and wasn't crying, and we got down to the real facts in the case, he had taken the pound of butter and the leg of lamb, the coffee on several trips out to the car because his mother had told him to take them to the car. We've had children of every age for shoplifting. Tie had quite a number of occasions where the shoplifting was encouraged by the parents.

And along the same line, of parents condoning or encouraging, I remember one time going with William Brodhead, when he was in the juvenile department of the Reno police department, to a home where there were nine bicycles and the parts of a half a dozen more. One was lying on the floor in the kitchen of the home, and they had removed the serial number of the bicycle with files. The father was home when we got there; he wasn't

working. His story was how could he possibly keep track of the bicycles of his children and his friends? He didn't know which bicycle belonged to which child. But the parts, some of them were under a bed, some of the parts were on a shelf, some of the parts were in a garage, some had left the premises in garbage collection, some had been traded. The father called us, William Brodhead and me, names, called us the names in front of the children and said that the police were always picking on his children, told me that I had hounded them from the time I first got acquainted with one child in his family. They probably would have to leave the community to escape all the mistreatment that they had received in this community.

My children had bicycles. I never drove in the driveway that I couldn't tell, if the garage door was open, whether there was a bicycle in the garage that didn't belong to my children, and that if there were two or three, that there must be two or three friends in the house with my children. I don't think that I ever played Dick Tracy to a point that I could walk in the garage door and know what was missing and what wasn't. But I know that if I walked into the garage and there were things in that garage that we hadn't purchased that I would know it, the same as if I walked into the closet of either my daughter or son. If there were articles of clothing hanging on hangers, I would know whether they had been purchased or whether they were gifts. But people are that way, and as long as they are that way, why, there's work for law enforcement. And as we all know, shoplifting on a national level is a—well, I call it a national disgrace.

## VANDALISM

Arrests for vandalism are frequent. They vary in ages from the young child who's

thrown a rock through a school window to the almost eighteen-year-old that has deliberately, oh, damaged, say, the car, the aerials on a half-dozen cars, or has damaged parked cars; a group of boys riding around town in a car that will throw bottles through parked car windows or up on the porches, or even through house windows; or the youngsters that go into the toilet of a public park and will deliberately break the wash basin, or deliberately break the toilet, or deliberately damage the walls, or anything. Youngsters that will break into a school, overturn desks, throw glue on the wall, throw paint on the wall, write dirty names on the blackboards, the common four-letter words. Sometimes they're looking for things that they want. They may confine actions to vandalism, but they also may rifle desks and take money. They may take athletic equipment.

But quite often, the youngsters involved in vandalism have personal, emotional problems. Quite often, they are very unhappy children, and this vandalism is an acting out against society. Sometimes, though, the acts of vandalism will be because they're angry at someone and they are striking back, or they're—. Well, quite often, with the schools, it's that way. They'd be angry at a particular teacher, and so they'll do damage to the building. Sometimes the youngster— well, has such rigid rules at home and has to walk such a tight line that—and is very unhappy. He probably wouldn't do anything like that alone, but with a couple other youngsters and something is suggested, he'll go right along with the others and maybe do more, ten times the damage that the other two did. They generally get courage from each other; they generally do it together.

As you know, Reno and Sparks are not unique, or Washoe County's not unique. School vandalism occurs all over. I think

we have far too much of it here, but I suppose probation officers think that in every community they have too much of it. But you do generally run into the situation when you have a child with serious emotional problems, personal problems, generally they're unhappy children. Quite often, the only way we can help some of those youngsters is by removing them from their home, placing them in a situation where they can be more comfortable. Sometimes they'd have to be referred to Mental Health. sometimes some of them would be so disturbed that they'd end up being placed by the judge with the state hospital for observation, have to have real serious psychiatric or psychological studies done.

Many acts of vandalism are done just as thoughtless acts or just as a lark, or at the time they think it's real funny to push over or knock down or tear up or do something like that. I can't say that many are larks, but I say a lot of the youngsters that are involved in the serious acts of vandalism are youngsters with serious personal problems.

### **ARSONISTS**

Very often the arrest is made by fire department officials for a particular act committed by the child. For example, in the area of arson, the youngster has thrown a match into some weeds and starts a fire and it burns a fence post. The child has taken some newspapers and put them between a garbage can and a wooden fence and started a fire. The child has taken a box of newspapers into the basement of a building and set them afire. The child turns in a false fire alarm. The child starts a fire in an abandoned building. Sometimes it's just children playing with tire, and accidentally the fire gets away from them. They had had no intention whatsoever of really

starting a fire; they were playing with matches. In a lot of the cases, they had every intention of starting the fire. They might have started a number of fires in their neighborhood, they might have started a number of fires in the community, and then this one time they start a fire, and they are apprehended, or the fire department and the police department are able to detect and apprehend the youngster or youngsters responsible.

Quite often, these children have emotional problems or are mentally ill, or at least are emotionally disturbed. Sometimes these cases, starting fires, is all tied up with sex. Sometimes they will start a fire deliberately, under circumstances that they know they will be apprehended because they know that they need help. I can illustrate this with a case that I remember, a boy who started fires for the excitement of the fire engines, and in the excitement of the fire engines would masturbate publicly.

### **FAMILY PROBLEMS**

Because the juvenile court cases are confidential, as they should be, because our work with the children when they're arrested is confidential, as it should be, the public doesn't learn very often that where it might read as something trivial at the time of their arrest, that the referral of that child to the probation department might be the most involved, serious, or tragic case that you'd had in a period of many years. The police might bring, for example, a youngster at two o'clock in the morning to Wittenberg Hall for curfew. The youngster is wandering around downtown, or the youngster is wandering around at Idle wild Park at two o'clock in the morning, or the youngster is hanging around a parking lot. They think maybe he's looking in cars, or breaking into cars, or

something. Or maybe they're just suspicious of his activities. Maybe there's no offense at all, except the curfew.

The youngster at Wittenberg Hall tells the officer that he lives at such and such an address, and this is the telephone number. The police officers dial the number, no one answers. The child's parents can't be contacted to come down and get the child (because, ordinarily, we had too many youngsters and too many problems to keep every youngster just because he was out late, at Wittenberg Hall). But anyway, there's no parents to release the child to, so he stays. He showers, wakes his bed, goes to sleep at Wittenberg, and gets up in the morning and has breakfast. Probably first, the intake officer talks to the child to make the arrangements to get him released to the parents. Maybe the child won't talk to the intake officer, or maybe he starts crying.

I'll give an example of one that was there for curfew violation, and when I read the arrest sheet I wondered why something more hadn't've been done because the hall was crowded at the time. So I got to talking to the youngster. And there'd been really very little exchange of conversation when (this was a boy) he grabs his hair with both hands and throws himself around in the chair and screams, "I won't go home! I'm not going home! You can't make me go home! And if you make me go home, I'll run away!" I continued to talk to the youngster, and finally he calms down, but he doesn't say too much more. And probably in part because I'm so surprised at the outburst at the time and wondering what it might be about, I take him back to the hall from my office, put him back in the program.

I telephone the home telephone number; there's no answer, still. I call the school that he is attending and get verification from the school that he is going to that school, and it is the correct address, and is the correct

telephone number. There's no father listed; it's just the mother. She has local employment, works nights. So I have one more clue. The youngster is in violation of curfew because there's no one at home to supervise. I'm wondering, too, about why the outburst, why is the child so unhappy.

I make a point of talking to him at lunchtime. We do serve such very good food at Wittenberg. It's generally quite easy to engage in friendly, casual conversation at mealtime, or during that hour. He's more relaxed, and I'm not asking him many questions about family or school, or anything. It's just friendly, casual conversation. I notice, too, that a couple of times, why, he's really fighting to keep back tears again, but I don't say anything more at the time. I just let him go on in the program, and then about midafternoon, I go get him and take him back up to my office again and explain to him that because we are crowded, and we do need the beds, and that ordinarily for curfew we do release to parents, and that I have checked with the school, and that I know that he does have a mother, and she works locally and at night, ask him if he likes school. He says, "Pretty well."

"Do you like Reno?"

"Yes, I like Reno."

"Do you go to school regularly?"

"No. Sometimes I miss because I sleep in in the morning, don't wake up.

I ask questions like, "Well, don't you have an alarm clock to get you up to school on time?"

"No

"Why don't you?"

"I had one. My dad gave me one, but my mother hocked it."

"Why did your mother hock it?"

"Cause my mother gambles."

"Well, gambling is legal in tins town, and lots of people play slots."

"Oh, I don't mean that. My mother gambles everything."

In the course of the conversation, he tells me about his father sending him a record player for Christmas, money for records. And he bought some records. Several weeks later, coming home from school one day, the record player and the records are gone. The mother had sold the record player and the records. He told me that he really didn't even have enough clothes for school. But even if he bought them, it wouldn't necessarily mean that he could keep them. I did eventually go to his home with him and went into his room, and there was just the barest of essentials. In fact, the whole house was just the barest of everything. There was a stove, refrigerator, and table and a couple of chairs, but there wasn't a toaster; they had had one. There wasn't a blender; they had had one. He said, too, that he liked to cook. The Mixmaster that he liked to use had been sold. His father had given him a new piece of luggage. The last time that he'd gone to visit the father, the luggage had been sold.

Anyway, what I'm leading up to—he was probably one of the unhappiest boys that I have met in a long time. He really needed help. He really had problems. But he didn't want to hurt his mother. She was always sorry when she did things. She was going to make it up to him. She was going to buy him something. If she did buy him something, in time it was sold again. He didn't have anything, really.

That case was resolved by having the father come to Wittenberg Hall. I did file a petition. I did take the youngster to court. I did request that the court give the father the physical custody because that was the boy's wish. The mother fought me every inch of the way, stating that she was a good mother, that she never abused the child. That she had not, in the way she thought of it. She hadn't spanked, she hadn't hit him, she did provide

sufficient food, and he did have, I guess, almost sufficient clothes. The house was orderly; it wasn't a pigpen (and I've gone into many of those). But he did have a bed, he did have a roof over his head. There was heat, all that sort of thing.

The youngster had quite good attendance through the school years. He'd gotten to be a junior without anyone realizing that there was a problem. Quite often youngsters don't come to the attention of school counselors or school principals if they're getting along fairly well. But, anyway, to make a long story a little shorter, the boy continued to reside with the father, he did graduate from high school the next year in that California community. He did go on to a junior college in that community, attended two years, did well. He attended the third year of school somewhere else. The fourth year of college he came back to Reno, enrolled at the University of Nevada, did well here at the University, but didn't graduate until his fifth year because of transferring credits. This boy (man) is working in one of California's larger communities now as a probation officer, working with dependent and neglected children.

I'll give you, now, another type of case, where (this was before Wittenberg Hall and we were still using the jails) I was at the Reno city jail one morning. It was about eleven a.m., and a nurse with whom I was acquainted at Washoe Medical called me at the jail. She'd been told by my secretary that that's where I was, so she called. She asked me if I would come to Washoe Medical before three that afternoon, when she went off shift so that she could talk to me. That's all she'd tell me on the telephone.

I went to Washoe Medical, and we went to a room where we had a cup of coffee. She said that there was a young man in the hospital who had received such a severe beating, the

worst that she had seen in all her years as a nurse. She didn't know what was being done, if anything, and she felt that our department should have knowledge of the case.

Actually, she should have called the welfare department at the time because this was a matter of dependency and neglect, rather than a matter of delinquency, and we had, by that time, in this county, with our departments, relegated responsibilities, and the Washoe County welfare was handling dependent, neglected children. We were handling the arrested child.

But anyway, I thought, well, maybe both departments might be in on it, so I went with her up to the four-bed ward and met this young man. And he had—and I'll never forget, so I can tell it without having to go look at notes, if I had the notes—a broken wrist (left wrist), three broken fingers on the left hand, a broken elbow (the left), a broken collarbone, a broken shoulder bone. He had, they thought at that time, internal injuries which as yet had not been determined. His right ear had practically been torn off his head, and that had been sewn back, and there were certain medical things going with that. He had worse than a black eye. I've never seen anything like it in my life. His upper front teeth had been knocked out. He was not able to talk at the time so that I could understand him, and I had no intention to question at the time; anyway, except that I did learn from him, and could understand, that the beating was administered by his father.

I discussed the case with the judge, and rather than signing the warrant for the father's arrest, a law enforcement official in the city signed the complaint, and he was arrested and put in jail. When the boy could talk coherently, he told me that, over the years, his father had spanked him, and over the years his father had beat him, but never any thing like



this beating that resulted with his being put in Washoe Medical Center. He told me that the reason for this particular beating was that when he brought home his first report card of the fall semester, he had a D in a major subject. I don't remember now if it was history or math or language, but it was a D. The father told him at the time that if he brought home another D, that he'd give him a beating that he would remember—in fact (and I'll put in quotes what the father told the boy because this was also used in court), that he was going to “kick the shit out of him.” He literally did do that in this beating.

The father's rights—there was no mother in the home—were terminated (the parents divorced when this boy was about two years old), and the boy lived with the paternal grandmother for a number of years, and then went back to the father when he married again. I think he had just started school, was about six when he went back with the father. Anyway, when the boy was able to get around and out of the hospital, we placed him in a not licensed foster home, but with personal friends of the judge and personal friends of mine. This man who became his foster father was a practicing attorney in this state and an exceptionally wonderful man, as his wife is a wonderful woman. They took this boy into their home, and they were paid for several months the going rate that the county paid for foster placement. And to tie this in, too—because you'd wonder why the father wasn't contributing to the support—when he appeared in municipal court, he was fined, his wife paid the fine, and they totally removed themselves from the community. They did come back eventually. But they left. His whereabouts were unknown.

But anyway, the foster father and mother, then, because of the boy's attitude in the home, because of his conduct, and because

of his very fine performance in the new high school (we changed high schools), they did not want to accept the money, but if the court were willing, they would like the court to put the money in a separate account for him. Well, you can't do a “rather than” sort of thing that way, but the court did consent to continue the monthly payment, and they could start a savings account for him for further education, which the couple did do.

The boy finished his junior and senior year in high school in their home and graduated from Reno High School. Because he felt that he should help to put himself through school (even though this couple were willing to help him, and there wasn't much money in the savings account), he did work for a year.

Unlike most boys, he didn't buy a car, and he didn't spend his money; he saved it. He had sufficient money to go away to school, and he did go, was accepted by a college in California. He attended that school for two years, and then transferred to the University of California at Berkeley. He graduated with a major in business economics. He had employment before graduation with an oil company in California. Now, to finish college, and especially his senior year so that he could really put all of his mind to his books and do well, the attorney and his wife came back into the picture. They gave him financial support for the senior year. He had some parttime weekend work. He repaid the money they had advanced for his education, every dime. Today, he is an executive with the oil company and living in California.

I did want to say that the father did eventually come back to this community, he and the same wife, and, as far as I know, they still reside here. well, that's one more case.

I'd like to state, too, that most people in a community do not understand that, even though a youngster might be referred to the



probation department for truancy or curfew or shoplifting or petty theft, and it would appear to them to be very minor in nature, yet, it was with many of these cases that we became involved in very, very serious home situations which might involve far more hours of the officer's time in the course of a week than a very serious court case, where the youngster might have been involved in an offense that would be a felony if committed by an adult.

I recall one of the junior high counselors calling and wanting a probation officer to come to the school that afternoon., reference a youngster in the school who had become the butt of many youngsters in the school, their making fun of him because of how he was attired. It so happened that I was the one to go to the school that afternoon, and this little twelve-year-old was in school with—. Of course, today (now, this was quite a few years ago), almost anything goes. The mother had taken scissors and cut off the boy's jeans above the knee and sent him to school that way as part of a disciplinary action. The other youngsters teased him until the poor boy was beside himself.

It appeared to be something rather minor in nature, but when I did get into the home situation, even the very first interview with the mother, from then on, it was one of the most complicated family situations I've ever been involved in. There were two older girls in the family with whom the mother had a good relationship. There was also a younger boy in the family (about the time I got into it, he was a preschooler), about five, and this twelve-year-old. The two girls were from a first marriage that was dissolved by divorce. The twelve-year-old boy was from a second marriage, also dissolved by divorce, and the little fellow was without benefit of clergy, sort of between marriages, and there had been

another marriage within the couple-year period, but no children as a result of that issue, and that had ended in a divorce. The mother also had a pretty good relationship with the little preschooler.

But as I got into the case, with the assistance of one of the school psychologists and the counselor I learned that this mother was actually punishing the boy because, as he got older (and she had apparently told him on quite a few occasions, "You're getting so that you look just like your father," or, "You're beginning to act just like your father," and this youngster had heard the father referred to on many occasions with all the derogatory language in the book), she was rejecting this youngster because of his mannerisms and looking like his father. The boy was unable to handle this rejection. In the first place, he was not a good student, would probably never be a real good student, not too comfortable in the academic school setting. But considering everything that we learned about the home, actually, a quite well-adjusted little individual in most situations.

He continued on in the home for a period of time with this outside agency assistance, with the supervision. And then the mother would discipline him in some manner that would, again, bring him to our attention. Maybe she decided to keep him home to babysit this younger boy on Friday because she knew that there was an assembly at the school of something the boy really wanted to attend, or it was a day where there was going to be a school track meet and he wanted to be there, or it was an afternoon school party, or almost anything, but then, again, she was punishing him by depriving him of something that he liked. Or maybe again, she would make him wear something that would attract the attention of the other youngsters and cause him to have more ridicule.

We realized by the next school year that we'd have to do differently, and it did result in our placing this child in a foster home. Because the youngster did get along very, very well in the foster home, the mother, because of her guilt feelings, couldn't leave it alone, and she had to disrupt and cause problems in the foster home until the foster mother wouldn't keep the boy any more because of the mother's interference and requested that we place him in another home. It eventually came to that. Well, there was further rejection for the child.

So I say, this all started out as a rather minor incident, but it went on and on. Finally, it had to be resolved this way, that the court felt that the only way we could help this child was to get him completely, physically away from the mother, and we did place him in a foster home in one of our rural counties.

Just about the time that we made the placement the mother married again. The school counselor and I met him at the home shortly after the marriage, and both of us were rather impressed with the man—I mean, that was our immediate reaction. Well, several months went by, and one of the two older sisters reported to her counselor (and that girl was attending Reno High by that time) that her stepfather was, as she said to the counselor, “too friendly.” So there was an involvement, again, in what we called “intensive case work” with that family for another period of time because of this older sister. The stepfather denied any improper conduct other than what he considered to be normal to him, and the girl insisted that he did put his hands upon her person.

It finally was resolved when the mother had to decide whether the stepfather stayed on in the home or the daughter continued on in the home. Actually, it got to be almost a contest. Her daughter did win out, and she separated from the stepfather, and he moved

out of the home. Then she started dating him away from the home, and then she'd stay all night with him at his apartment. And then the two girls, on nights when she didn't come home, started having friends of theirs come to the home in the mother's absence. So, in another big blowup one night, why, the police were called and we were back into the situation. I don't mean to say, either, that at any one time everything was totally quiet. I mean our supervision was continuous, but there were peaks and valleys, and then there'd be these crisis situations.

So then the younger of the two girls was arrested for curfew. She went with a girlfriend to a show, and then they went somewhere else and didn't go home. Anyway, it was a legitimate curfew deal. So, of the four children, three now were known to our department.

Then one Friday afternoon, when the two girls were home from school, the mother told them that a good friend of hers was very ill in Sacramento and that she had a friend who was going to take her to Sacramento that evening, and she probably wouldn't be back 'til Monday. She gave them money to buy food (there wasn't any neglect along that line), and they were to run the household, and there were to be no friends there in the evening hours. They could each have a friend there during the daytime hours, and she was sure that she'd be back sometime on Monday morning, although she had Monday off.

Well, she didn't come back on Monday, and she didn't come back on Tuesday, and the money did run out, and the younger of the two girls (and, I think, quite conscientiously, wondering what [was] for their evening meal), when she stopped in at one of the larger stores on North Virginia Street, along with doing a little shopping, she did a little shoplifting. And I can remember still, she

took some sweet rolls and things that didn't make the [laughing] best balanced diet for that particular meal, but apparently things she was hungry for. So the police were back into the picture.

So to get some kind of a real involvement, we did file a petition and take the youngsters to court as dependent and neglected children for the judge to make a decision. When he reviewed the school report and the probation report and the reports of the school psychologist and statements from everyone else that might have been involved at the time, he made the decision that the youngsters were to be placed away from the natural mother, but that she would contribute to their support. We put all three youngsters in the same foster home with the boy, who, when we got into the case originally, was twelve, and we kept the children together.

About four or five months after that, out of the blue, the mother married again, and then asked, because he was such a wonderful man, to have her children returned, and she would not work. She would stay at home. He had a good job and could earn sufficient money to support them. And all along, too, she was getting some support money from the divorced husbands. But the judge said that he would discuss it with her again in thirty days, and gave her an appointment for that time. And she had several character witnesses with her at the time, all of whom had an opportunity to speak to the judge. I strenuously objected to the youngsters returning to the mother at that time, but the judge did approve of their return, and all four of them were in the home again.

And then, almost automatically, the same old story, the mother started with the older boy in her cruel kind of discipline. The younger one was getting old enough by that time, too, that she was starting this same

pattern with him. One girl was back in the home for a short time, ran away, got married. Within a few months, the second girl was out of the home and in the community; she didn't leave the community, but first was in the home of one friend and then the home of another friend. The older boy had left the community with some friends a couple times. They didn't steal anything or they didn't get arrested, but they' were gone. The younger one was shoplifting and tardy every morning at school. He was also involved with other boys in acts of malicious mischief. And then one weekend, both boys were involved with several others in breaking into one of our local schools. They did a lot of damage—I mean real damage to the school. They destroyed, and they threw paint, and they threw ink, and they broke bottles of paste on the floor, and wrote a lot of four-letter words on the blackboards, and—oh, it was really difficult to conceive that the small number of youngsters could have done the damage that they did do in the school in the period of time that they were supposedly in the building.

So, we're again in court. The boys go back to the foster home out in the rural community. This one case involved hundreds of hours for me alone, not including the hours for school personnel and law enforcement. That was just one little case. Both boys continued on under court supervision as court wards until their eighteenth birthday. So it seemed like almost all of the years [laughing] that I was the chief probation officer here, I worked with that one family. Now, that isn't quite true, but I mean, it just went on year after year after year. I mention that just as a clarification for anyone who might sometime read this material, showing that the offense actually had little, if anything to do with the work involved with a particular case. It wasn't just a youngster committing an offense. It was the offense that

would bring the youngster to the attention of an agency, naturally, with the police to start with, and then, a referral to our department, then the total involvement.

Quite often, when Stead Air Force Base was in operation, we'd get acquainted with a young teenager because of her involvement with airmen; everything from just knowing, or an occasional show or dating, or even running away with young airmen. And quite often, these young airmen were actually juveniles by our state law. Many were under the age of eighteen. Quite often, we would get an involvement where the girl was looking for attention and affection from a young man because she was being neglected in the home situation. It wasn't that they'd be doing anything really bad at all. It was just that these immature young girls would get themselves, sometimes, too involved with these young airmen. They weren't always necessarily single lien; sometimes they had a wife somewhere. But what it would generally amount to would be a situation where the girl would be the oldest, or she would be one of the older children in a family, and then there were young children, and the mother was working, so that this girl, twelve-, thirteen-, fourteen-, fifteen-year old, was really an unpaid babysitter. And she got into a home situation where (and I remember lots of them) it was her responsibility, because the mother was sleeping, to get these other younger children up and give them their breakfast and get them ready and off to school.

If she did things to please the children, she incurred the anger of the parents. If she was doing things—well, for example, maybe fixing a cooked cereal for the youngsters for breakfast, and all they wanted was a doughnut, or if she insisted that they brush their teeth before they left for school, or things like that, the little girl eventually found herself in the

middle of a situation where it was almost impossible for her to please the parent or parents on the one hand and get along with the younger children on the other hand.

Quite often this girl would have to return home from school in the afternoon but immediately, and start preparation for the evening meal, or prepare the evening meal, and, again, maybe in the evening time, have to give these younger children their bath, get them to bed. Because of the different shifts or different working hours of these parents, maybe in some cases the mother was going to be home, maybe, at seven. And she'd get off work all right, but then she'd have a drink or two. So the girl's at home, dinner's ready to put on the table waiting for Mother, but she doesn't come. Not to go on and on in just a vague deal like this, but these youngsters really were the victims in their own home situations of being substitute mothers, and were seeking, themselves, the affection and the attention that they weren't getting from these young men in the community who were away from their own homes. And several of the airmen said to me at different times, and I'll quote them, "Well, gee, Mr. Nelson, I'm footloose and fancy-free, and I thought she was older," or, "She told me that she was older," or, "Nobody seemed to think that there was anything wrong with me going over to the house, even though her folks were working." There were always a lot of rationalizations and explanations. But they were situations that did, in quite a few cases, cause lots of problems for these young girls.

Then, too, quite often—I shouldn't say quite often, but often—when these girls came to our attention, they'd be pregnant. Sometimes there would be a marriage. Quite often, there wouldn't be a marriage. So I used to feel—and we all did—especially sorry and tried to be more than just understanding

with these little girls that really had problems because of parents' expecting them to be adults when they should've been having a little fun for themselves and an opportunity for recreation. There were many of these cases, more than in other areas of this size, because of the kind of community we are, with a lot of people working swing shifts and graveyard shifts.

Then, too, I would have to say that, as further explanation with a lot of these cases, we would get involved, for example, with a youngster who wasn't participating in P. E. because notice after notice had gone home, and the youngster still didn't have' gym clothes. Each day they weren't in gym and couldn't dress for gym, they'd get a zero. So there'd be F's on the report cards for the P. E. class.

Well, a case would come to our attention, and we would learn that both parents were employed with sufficient income, a very sufficient income, but the income not reaching the children. Possibly both parents drank quite regularly, maybe socially, maybe not just socially, maybe there were drinking problems. Maybe one or both were gambling. They would say, "Well, it's recreation for us, and we take a couple dollars and we play a few slots," or he says, "Well, gee, I've been marking a ticket every day for years," or some of them, too, cashing their checks in a club would then have to be a big shot and treat a group of friends or a group at the bar, or maybe start playing a game, blowing the check. Quite often, the family fight situations ended up with one or more parents out in the yard and the police being called. It was Friday again, and the husband had received his paycheck and cashed it in one of the clubs, came home in a cab, using the last dollar, last of that paycheck, and the mother quite concerned with what she was going to use for money

for groceries for the weekend. Or as I've had them say to me so many times, "Well, he knows I shop every Saturday morning. What was I going to use for money? I shop once a week, and here the next morning's Saturday and there's no money in the house."

So many, many, many youngsters became victims of adults through (I have an expression for it I used to use) careless living, or careless living patterns. I can give another illustration along that line. The youngster that would come to the attention of the school principal or school counselors or police or get put out of a theater or out of a store downtown because of his language, using the four-letter words. I did not have to be around the parents but a very short time to realize where everything was coming from. They had grown up with it. That's what they heard at home, "You goddamn—," or the word "bastard," or "son of a bitch," and all those words which poured out of them. Not that we all don't know the words, but we don't use them that way. In so many of these homes they were used, and used all the time, and not used, necessarily, as profanity, but I called it just very careless living patterns, or careless speech. Everything was with a "goddamn." The youngsters picked it up, hearing it all the time, so why not say or use the same language with others in the community?

I can't help but include here a case that I got into concerning three brothers in a residence in Home Gardens. When I really got into the investigation, I learned that these three youngsters, all of whom had the same mother (two had the same father, the youngest had a different father, but all three had the same mother), but they're in the home with a one-time stepfather. He had at one time been their stepfather legally, but he had divorced the mother, and he had no legal responsibility for these children whatsoever.



He was not related to any of them. There had been nothing done about an adoption while he was married to their mother—nothing. He did divorce her, paid for the divorce (it was legal), moved out of the home, had no financial responsibility whatsoever. Yet the mother one weekend brought these three boys to this man's home, who was baching in this house out in Home Gardens, and asked him if he would keep them for her for the weekend. He knew them and they liked him. He did consent to and did take them. She didn't come back after the weekend. The man was employed, but his wages were such that, really, all of a sudden, to clothe and to feed three growing boys—you know, he was having problems and finding it very difficult, but still was the caliber of man who was making every effort to do the best possible job to care for those youngsters.

When we got into the case, it was possible, with a directive from the court, to give this man some financial assistance, to help him. And those youngsters continued to reside in this one-parent home, and they in turn all became high school graduates out of his home. Here was a man who had no legal responsibility whatsoever, but the court gave him temporary custody (a kind of guardianship) when it all came to our attention, and then he, of course, did have some legal responsibility. We all had the highest respect for this good man.

I remember, myself, growing up with some belief in one of the generalizations of "cruel stepmother," or "cruel stepfather." Over the years I was involved in cases where there were cruel stepparents. Put yet, on the whole, I can make a more honest generalization, that, on the whole, the stepparents were better (in many cases, and in more cases) to the children than we became involved with than were natural parents. The mother of a stepparent would become the

adored stepgrandparent of children—again, nothing legal, nothing binding, no moral responsibility, no nothing—and yet eventually have the custody of these children, have them placed in her home because she could offer them a better living situation than anybody else in the picture, preventing the court from having to put them in an institutional setting. They could stay with this person they called "Grandma" because she actually provided the best possible home.

Over the years, we quite often got involved with situations where the child was living in a home, where the parents were requesting permission from the court to allow the child to continue living in their home; that they would take full financial responsibility for the youngster if the court would give them custody. They'd gotten acquainted because at one time they were neighbors. They lived across the street from each other, or they lived down the street. Quite often, children would form friendships and find security and safety in the home of a friend, and eventually this friend's parents' requesting of the court that (well, we'll call him Bobby), "Bobby lives at our house most of the time anyway. The two boys get along beautifully. We're very fond of him. The mother's in and out of the community. Most of the time, she does this or doesn't do this. Your Honor, we'd like very much to have the child in our home." And, of course, we would have made an investigation and be able to recommend, "Well, yes, to the judge, 'we do believe that it's a good home placement.'"

Sometimes we would have cases where the youngster had done nothing whatsoever wrong at all, at home or school or in the community, and yet would come to our attention because the mother would have brought a new boyfriend into the home. This new one would give her a directive, "Well,



if the kids're gonna stay, I'm leaving," and give their mother a choice of her children or the choice of the boyfriend. Sometimes they chose the boyfriend.

So what I'm trying to say, and I guess I can say it in fewer words, is that, never ever, generally, is it what meets the eye or what you might read in the paper or you might get on a little referral sheet of a few lines. The cases can be unbelievably complicated. They can go on for long periods of time.

Now, for example, today I was at Wittenberg Hall at the lunch hour, and there were several youngsters there that I knew in their younger years. One of the boys I hadn't seen for about five years. Another one of the boys, I hadn't seen for maybe two, two and a half years. One of the girls I have seen, off and on, in the last year, but she was back in there. She must be fifteen, sixteen now, I'm sure. I first got acquainted with her when she was a preschooler. So that's just to explain this serious involvement of probation departments with children and with families, regardless of how it might appear, regardless of how it might have been referred.

In fact, I think most of the probation officers would agree with me that probably one of the most difficult family involvements is where the youngster comes to a probation department with an original referral by the police, being labeled an "incorrigible," the word incorrigible meaning that "they're beyond the control of their parent," or "they won't abide by the discipline of the parent." The parent that tells a child to come home after school and they come when they please, the child that's told to go to school and doesn't go to school, the child that is told by the parent that he's not to take another bottle of beer out of the refrigerator, and he does, and all those things, actually, that are discipline problems within a home.

Most of those cases, where the youngster comes to the department, referred as an incorrigible, are probably the most difficult of all the cases, or were, prior to the time that we got into the drug scene. Now I don't think that they're more difficult than the drug scene. I think that's the most difficult. Put until that time, they were the most difficult. Almost without exception, all the probation officers would agree with me. You could have more involvement and more difficulties and more problems, seemingly without solutions, in that type of family case than almost anything else.

#### **STEAD AIR FORCE BASE AND JUVENILE PROBLEMS**

Because in the scrapbooks\* there are a considerable number of articles that did involve men and young men stationed at the air base, I would have to say in their behalf that many of them were not guilty of any wrongdoing. Lots of times, the youngsters, the girls, in fright, would make accusations, and because of their young ages, the guilt fell on the shoulders of the men or young men involved. But I, right now, can't think of a single case where I ever felt that any of those young men or older men had ever forced their attentions on any of these girls. Most of the time, if there were relationships, it was probably because the girl really encouraged the relationship. Then, also, a lot of these girls, with their attire and with their makeup and all the rest of it, would—well, lots of them would put on different clothes away from home and

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\*Scrapbooks of the Probation Department, Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno, Library.

put on the makeup away from home, and they would appear older. In fact, we would be quite shocked lots of times when these youngsters would really get the “warpaint,” as we called it, scraped off, and see them, and see the difference in their appearance. They just washed years off of that fade. Of course, lots of girls, too, mature physically at a young age, and it wasn’t too hard to believe these men when they say, “Well, she said she was eighteen, and I thought she was,” or, “Her friends said, too, she was eighteen,” or, “She was going to be eighteen in a few weeks,” so that they’re learning then at the time she was going to be fifteen in a few weeks. Some of the girls that did marry [at] that time are still married to those men. A lot of them have families, and quite a number of them, with these military men, returned to this community to reside. There’s quite a few in the Reno-Sparks area living here today.

Occasionally an individual did take advantage of a young girl. There were cases when anyone would surely know that the girl was the age of thirteen or fourteen or fifteen, and they did go into the home in the absence of the parents, knowing that the parents weren’t going to be there. Some of these fellows, too, would take things from the home. Quite often it would be a theft of a bottle of bourbon, or maybe a bill out of a wallet. Not too often would they be involved in the theft of jewelry or things like that. But it was generally a little money or liquor. There were some cases where they took advantage of the child’s age, but in most cases no, they did not.

## **RUNAWAYS**

Again, where the arrest offense may be one thing, and the story revealed by the youngster another—. In the field of runaways,

this county has very many youngsters running from here, as well as our having a lot of out-of-state runaways coming into this area, attracted to the area by all of our publicity. Some come here to be married, and some from neighboring California communities come here thinking they’re going to the floor shows, and some of them think they’re going to gamble, and some of them do, once in a while, play some slots (the larger clubs are very well supervised).

For various and sundry reasons they come here—for the moment, I’d like to talk about the youngsters whose legal residence is here and they’re running from the community (we’ve had many, many hundreds over the years). Quite often, as truancy is a symptom of a school problem, running away is a symptom, generally, of home problems, or school problems, or both. More girls run than boys, and probably most of the girls who do run are in the age bracket of thirteen to sixteen. When the Haight-Ashbury area was getting so much publicity, we had runaways increase in numbers to that area. These girls were able to hide out in the Haight-Ashbury, and the police either had too much to do, or really weren’t able to find them. But they could hide out in that area very successfully for three months, four months, seven months, even though the all-point bulletins went out continuously, and local concerned people would go down there and search, also. Once in a while, a parent would find the child where the police had been unable to, and I don’t say that in criticism of San Francisco police. During that period, we had a lot less success with law enforcement returning or apprehending runaways.

A girl will generally not run alone. She’ll generally talk a friend into running away with her, or maybe just in casual conversation with another student in school, will say, “Well, I’m

going to California to visit an aunt,” or, “I’m going to Los Angeles to see my brother.” They generally don’t tell the real reason, and they make it sound rather adventure some. And someone that they talk to maybe might’ve had words with a parent that morning or the night before, or maybe they’re getting a report card and they’re a little concerned of their grades, and maybe even just for the lark. But it’ll generally be two or more. sometimes they’ll leave with boys. Most of the time they hitchhike; some of the time, they buy bus tickets, so there’s no set pattern. Quite often, they will tell someone where they’re going who will give the police the lead. They’ll tell some youngster that they have a brother or they have a father in Los Angeles or the Bay area, and they want to see them. They can hide out quite successfully, as they did during the Haight-Ashbury period.

Many problems arise, can arise, and do arise, during the time of the runaway. But a lot of them, even though at such a young age, do not involve themselves in further difficulties. Lots of people apparently are very, very kind and understanding. They’re very good about giving them rides, even though they’re young. They will buy them a meal if they happen to eat during the time they’re giving the youngster a ride. Quite often, they have paid for a motel room for a youngster. You have those individuals, too, who are looking for that age youngster as hitchhikers to give them a ride, and then do attempt to have personal (intimate) relations, and sometimes are successful. We’ve even had some cases there they have forced themselves. It is rape, technically and legally. Sometimes, adults will get the youngster drunk and have relations with her or him while the youngster is drunk. Many of them, as I say, do travel rather successfully without getting involved in further difficulties.

Then, as in Haight-Ashbury, there are people who will help them to escape the clutches of the “fuzz,” as they say. Either someone provides food and shelter, or they help them find a job. Some of these young girls, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, have even had jobs as waitresses, jobs in drive-ins, jobs in theaters. Lots of times they maintain themselves quite well. Some will call their parents and ask if they can come home, or they come back of their own free will. Most of the time, they are apprehended and arrested and put in a detention home somewhere, and then we’re notified that they’re in custody. Because their legal residence is here, we have to make the arrangements for their return. If the parents can and will, they are responsible. If the parents can and won’t, or can’t and won’t, or would and can’t, then the probation department has to make the arrangements because it is the responsibility of the probation department in the county of legal residence.

When you get to talking to the youngster, they will generally reveal uncomfortable home situations of rather long standing. Again, they might be of a recent nature where the mother and father have just divorced, the mother has been awarded the legal custody, the youngster is resentful that the mother has divorced the father, wants to be with the father. Especially if she has words with her mother, why, then she wants to go to the father, and she tells the mother she’s going to run away and go to the father. A lot of these youngsters of divorce, too, learn very quickly that they can pit the divorced parents against each other. They also learn that they can use these parents in the two separate homes, one against the other.

Sometimes you learn a youngster has been very unhappy in the home situation because she knows that her mother was not married when she was born, and the man she believed

to be her father for many years is not; he's not only not her father, but they won't tell her who her father is. These youngsters get very emotional, very unhappy, and they don't necessarily want to be with the parent who has the legal custody. They want to be with the divorced parent. Or they don't want to be really with either parent; there's a grandparent or grandparents that they like and respect, and maybe they've lived (with them] for a period of time at one time or another. Or the youngster is very hateful towards the stepfather and feels that he's unfair or very hateful towards the stepmother. She feels the mother doesn't love her and believes she would like to get rid of her, and so she wants to go with an older married sister, older married brother— all those different combinations of circumstances. But you have a youngster who is, above everything else, unhappy. These children are not doing very well in the home because they're unhappy. They're not doing too well in school because they're unhappy. They're not doing too well in the community. They're probably being truants, and they're probably in violation of curfew.

Anyway, when the probation officer talks with these runaways and learns the reasons, it's a much larger problem than just a youngster running and now is found. You do have to hold runaways until proper disposition can be made. You cannot release them to parents as you can youngsters arrested for other offenses. Even if they insist they will not run again, you can't take that chance. You must hold until proper disposition is made. A good part of the time that means a court decision, with a judge making the disposition.

Sometimes it's not too complicated. The parents are able, maybe even by a long distance telephone call or by letter, to resolve the problem by the parent with legal custody, saying that he or she is willing for the other

parent to have the physical custody. Or, "Well, yes, let her come live with me at least 'til the end of the school year so that she will finish her school year." Anyway, they work it out without officials having to become involved. If the situation is such that they can't work it out themselves, then the judge must hear the facts of the case and hear from the child. If the child is fourteen years of age or older, the judge is very willing and very anxious to know their story, and if he can, quite often will honor their request, believing that if the placement is made because it's the child's choice that it has a better chance of proving successful. I think most of us, as probation officers, are inclined to have similar thinking about the problem.

Sometimes a runaway will be in custody for a number of days and might have told one story or a couple of stories and then doesn't want to stay in custody and decides that she'd better tell the truth. She has found security and understanding at our detention home, and then she'll come up with the true facts. And then we get these stories of the little girls that are physically and mentally mistreated in their home, or they have been sexually used. We've had cases where the first molester was the natural father. Maybe she's seven years old at the time, maybe she's eight or nine or ten, that, because the father has threatened her with physical harm, or even that he would kill her if she ever told anybody, she didn't talk. Maybe the parents eventually divorce and the mother still does not have knowledge of what has been happening under her own roof, she marries again, maybe the stepfather will continue the same practice with the girl. You have very sordid stories that will come out into the open with the apprehension of runaway girls, though similar stories sometimes come to us from school counselors (they learn the facts of the case at

school). Sometimes it's a neighbor who has befriended the youngster that learns the story, and she calls. Quite often, these youngsters, because of needing long-period care (and dependent on the finances of the family), we'll bring the county welfare or state welfare into the case because it'll mean foster home care, or sometimes institution care. Sometimes it can be handled with placement with another relative. I think just about anything that you've ever heard about or read about, we have come in contact with in the probation department in the last twenty years with runaway girls.

Once in a while, a runaway boy will have problems with male adults who pick the boys up and want to force themselves, or do force themselves on these young boys. But generally, the stories come from the girls. We have had girls who, when they were found five months after running away, were, say, three months pregnant, or four months pregnant. They might have had relations with a dozen or more individuals in the period of time they were gone. Quite truthfully, with a lot of them, they don't even know who was responsible for their pregnancy. We've had cases where the father or the stepfather has been arrested and gone to court and been sentenced to the Nevada State Prison for his conduct with his own natural daughter or his stepdaughter, or maybe a friend of the daughter, or friend of the stepdaughter.

I can illustrate it by one case where this little girl had been sexually misused by her natural father, and then sexually misused by a stepfather, and then became pregnant by her stepfather. Her natural mother knew that the stepfather was responsible for her pregnancy, and she and the stepfather arranged for an abortion for this youngster in Sacramento. She went right on living in the home. The mother did not go to the authorities, did not have any difficulties, really, with her husband

because of the problem. She just closed her eyes, in a sense, as to what was going on. Eventually the stepfather had the girl pregnant again. She gave birth to a stillborn child.

The story is sordid. The conduct of the adults is far worse than even despicable. Sometimes these men in the homes will realize that the story is out, so they take a powder and are long gone, and we're not able to follow through. But, naturally, in all cases where we can, we do assist law enforcement and the district attorney's office for prosecution of these adults.

The runaways are some of the saddest of all the cases. We've had them leave their home here in Reno and get word that they were in Colorado, or get word that they were in Washington, D. C. They've gotten as far as Florida to the southeast, as far as Maine to the northeast. We had one runaway who was apprehended in Honolulu. An adult male befriended her in the Los Angeles area, and when he went on to Honolulu, Pie bought her a ticket, took her along. So just almost any story that you might know of or read about, why, we could come up with a case history from the files in the probation department.

I would like to give examples to you of cases, and I will do it in such a way, too, that in no way can they possibly be identified, either the child or the parent or parents.

I'll start with one where a girl and boy were apprehended in a stolen car in Hawthorne, Nevada. The boy was fifteen plus. The girl was thirteen-plus. They were on their way to Los Angeles to live. And they were going to get married when they got to Los Angeles. When they were apprehended in Hawthorne they were taken to jail. The probation officer in that county was called, and he talked to them for some time, wasn't getting too much information that was helpful until later on in the day. Then he learned that the boy was



known to our department here in Reno, and he called me on the phone. I explained that I knew the family of the girl, but I knew the girl only to speak to, that she had never been referred officially, but that I knew the boy very well and that we would make arrangements and come after them, which we did. That was prior to detention days, so I had to bring them to the Reno city jail. They were booked in.

I got to talking to the little girl later, and she was just totally sincere about her feelings for this boy, and wanting to go to Los Angeles, wanting to get married, wanting to be a housewife. I would have to say this, that she would appear to almost anyone of being about three years older than she actually was, and she was quite a good-sized little girl, physically. The boy was about five-one at the time, and she was about five feet three at the time. These youngsters were running away from home situations which they both had found unbearable. Both of them, however, were quite comfortable in their school situations in this area. Both had passed their grades each year, and both of them were quite popular youngsters with their own friends in school. Both of them were bright children, but the girl was much brighter, had a much higher IQ than the boy. He was functioning well in school, but he really didn't have too much interest in an academic program; the girl did. She was especially gifted in language (English), in the social science subjects, and very, very capable in math.

Well, anyway, T had to file the petitions, and I had to take these two youngsters to court. The court histories both reported that they couldn't be returned to their own homes because, number one, both of them told me that if they did go home, they'd run away again. They both did tell me that they would run away together, and both of them told me that no matter what the court did do that they

would eventually get together, and they would get married.

The court did have to make placement of these two youngsters. The judge decided—and incidentally, too, he didn't complete the hearings that day; he continued them, and I had to make some further investigation for him for both youngsters, which I did do. When we returned to court, it was his decision that this little girl go to the Good Shepherd home in Helena, Montana even though she hadn't completed the eighth grade (they accepted high school students only) because of the psychological (which included the school 10 reports) and the fact that not only was she capable of handling an academic program on the high school level, but the judge felt she was, definitely, college potential and that she should have the opportunity for the academic program.

He felt that if he placed the little girl in the Good Shepherd home in Helena, then we could place the boy in this community in a foster home, put him back in school for the time being, at least, and see what we could do with those plans.

So this young lady did go to the Good Shepherd home in Helena. She not only did very well with the academic program, but she did better than any of the other girls that were in the school at the time, and she was in classes within about a year with high school juniors and seniors and could perform better than the high school juniors and seniors. She did graduate from the Good Shepherd home, from their high school. She did return to this community and was placed in a foster home. She convinced me that she wanted to work for a year because she felt so young with so many of the youngsters she'd gone to school with here. And she would like to work and save her money to help her in school, and she didn't really know what she'd want to take, and



she thought she'd be wasting her time, but she wanted to earn some money.

The court did consent that she take employment, and she did, and continued to reside in the foster home. She did very well with both. She handled the job okay, and she was no problem to the foster parents. The hours she was supposed to be home in the evening, she was. She did start a savings account, she was saving part of her money, but as the months went on, it was more difficult for her not to buy more clothes. I don't say that as a criticism because she was at an age where clothes were important to her.

She had knowledge, too, that an older sister was working in a club and, of course, earning much more money than what she was earning. And, all on her own, she did manage (and I, to this day, don't know how she did it) —but she did obtain club employment in this city as a change girl in one of our largest clubs. She left the foster home every day at the time like she was going to the job with the credit company. She didn't tell the foster parents that she'd taken club employment, and she didn't tell me.

In the club where she had employment, they changed her to a swing shift, so she had to tell the foster parents that she had new employment because one of the rules, too, was that she wasn't to change employment without the consent of the judge. When I learned she was working in the club, I reported it to the judge, who didn't make a decision immediately. He said, "Well, just—let's wait and see how things go for a little bit. It looks, maybe, like things might change with the foster home, too, now that they know where she's working.

Well, at about this time, too, that she'd been in club employment for a few weeks, she met a young man who was also a club employee. And like she had before with the

boy she ran away with, why, she just became completely infatuated. This young man thought that she was older than she was. She came to the office one day to tell me that they were getting married and invited my wife and me to the wedding, and asked would it be all right if she invited the judge and his wife [laughing] to the wedding.

Well, she had had her eighteenth birthday within that week, so we couldn't prevent her from marrying. We actually, technically, couldn't've continued her under this kind of supervision. Then I went to discuss it with the judge, he said to give her a court release, and we'd all give her our blessings, hope that the marriage'd be successful.

So she did marry the young man. She changed jobs from change girl to one of the table games. Her income improved to a point that the young husband felt, "Well, why should both of us work? She can work, and I'll stay home." So she was working and he wasn't. And then she got pregnant, and he had to go back to work, and she stayed home. He didn't go back to the same club (he got employment in another club), and then fell in love with another dealer, divorced his wife. He did not pay child support after the baby arrived, so this young lady had to make an arrangement with a friend, and they took employment at different hours so that one of the women was at home (her friend had two children; she had the one child) to take care of the three children. Her divorced husband, eventually divorced by the second wife, resumed the relationship with our former ward. They didn't get married, but she became pregnant again. They eventually remarried, and she had two children, and then he dropped from sight, just disappeared.

The young lady still resides here. She still has club employment. She is a "Twenty-One" dealer. She has married again, a divorced

man who had two children. So they have the four children in the home. They both are club employees. They reside in Sparks. And because I've just very recently talked with her on the telephone, supposedly, right now, everything's "just great."

To pick up the young man, who, when the girl was sent to Helena, was placed in a foster home here, he did complete that school year, but he never went back to school in the fall semester. He got a job helping an adult male who was building the cement blocks that are referred to as curbs in parking lots. They were built at his residence in Sun Valley and then trucked to the parking lots and installed. This young man was helping him, and then he and his wife said that they would give him board and room and a salary, and that they had this home large enough, and that our ward and his son were very good friends and that they'd like to have him, he'd be happier there, and would I get the consent from the court for him to live with them.

Well, before this could be accomplished, he left his foster home anyway, and went there to live. So the judge did give his consent, said that he could continue to reside there, and I was to supervise, but that, also, if he were to continue in residence there that the people would have to be licensed as a foster home, and if they were willing to do that, why, to continue the placement. So I talked to them, and they said that they were willing to do so, and they did become a licensed foster home.

Then there was another boy that was just roaming around the country, got acquainted with this adult male, and he was taken into the home (these people just gave him a home), and the man's son and these two boys, the four of them, were continuing in this work of curbs for parking lots, and then some other odd jobs. And then he, the father, got employment with a tree trimming outfit in this area, and

the boys were doing the cement work, or most of it. He helped when it came installation time.

Well, this continued for about a year, and then one weekend, the man's son and our ward took a powder. They just left the community. Put the other boy that was in the home told the foster father that he thought they were going to Los Angeles to live and to work. Well, we sent out the all-point bulletins, and we sent correspondence with background information to the Los Angeles probation department. And as it happened, these boys did go to the L. A. area and were there for a while. But then they met an individual who talked them into going with him to Phoenix, Arizona, that they could get work there. Eventually, in Phoenix, the boys got into difficulties with the law, were arrested, the authorities got the information that they were legal residents here, and they were willing to drop the charges there if we would make arrangements for them to be brought back to this community.

So we did, and they came back. They both had a court hearing. They both got probation. And they had the consent of the court to live in an apartment with the older brother of the court ward, who, during this time, had gotten along okay. He didn't graduate from high school, but he did go his senior year. So the three boys are living in an apartment. They did get employment. And that continued for about another year. The young man, of course, had gotten his court release from the court; he was no longer under our jurisdiction, but we still kept in contact.

In the meantime, he had no knowledge of either his natural father or natural mother, and he wanted to go into the military. Well, when you've had your eighteenth birthday, you don't have to have parents sign for the military, but he was under the impression that because he had been a court ward that he

had to have the consent, which he didn't need. Well, anyway, because there were arrests, he did have to clear with Navy recruiting, and that was all squared away. lie went into the Navy. Today he is a career man in the Navy. He is on Guam, the island of Guam. He is married. He married a divorced woman with two children, and this couple have two. So he's a married man with four children, lives in Guam. Now, those are the very quick summaries of two cases.

### ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

The probation department, in almost any community—and it certainly was in our community here— [is] involved with all kinds of cases. And where I don't like labels for children, you did have all kinds of children, and with very different problems and very different personalities. But you generally have a child who was a problem to his parents, or to the school, or to the community, or all three, or you had a child who had a problem too big for him to handle, and he needed help. Or he had several problems. And then almost in all cases, you could never assume anything. You had to get to the basics in the home, the school, and the community situation as it affected that particular child.

You could have six children referred at the same time, ages fifteen to seventeen, all because they were arrested for drinking. But one of the six, it might have been his tenth arrest. One of the six, it might have been his first arrest. It might have been the very first time that he did any drinking. His parents might have been just completely shocked and unable to believe that their youngster was one of this group, couldn't believe that he even knew some of the group of six. Questions like, "Well, where did he meet—?" "How could he possibly have met—?" "Thy was he with

them?" "Why, I can't believe that my son was involved." And yet, one of the group, I say, maybe it was his tenth arrest. Maybe he had already been told that if he was arrested again for drinking that his problem was considered so serious that a petition would have to be filed, that he would have to appear before the court. Maybe with that particular child, a complete physical was obtained from the family doctor, and that the doctor made the statement in his report that this boy had a very serious drinking problem, if he wasn't already started on the road to being an alcoholic. Or maybe he would say this child is an alcoholic.

Maybe one of the six was living with a divorced parent. Maybe he's living with the mother. Maybe at the time of the divorce, the boy had a good relationship with his natural father. Maybe he's very, very unhappy because his father is no longer in the home. Possibly he's hearing the mother name call the father. Maybe the child is being compared with his father in a derogatory manner. Maybe the child really got a break, the fact that he was arrested that day with the group because of all the other problems that brought about his being with that particular group and drinking that day, so that we could work out a program for him based on the whole story rather than just that little fragment.

Maybe one of the youngsters was repentant by the time his parents appeared and was very sorry that he was involved, that he had no intention of going out and getting drunk again. Possibly quite a good student, likes school, gets along well at home, has his own group of friends that he gets along with very well. Maybe the one talk with the child and his parents, and we close the case on that child.

Many, many youngsters are referred to the probation department that are not ever—well, they don't continue as a case. you may only talk to them one time. Maybe they're

never ever referred again. Maybe three years elapse and maybe they come in again for an arrest for something. So every child had to be handled on the facts as they pertained to that individual. And there is no grouping or lumping or assuming. You have to function and work out your plan based on the total picture for the individual. You can't draw conclusions. You can't make generalizations. You have to work with the child as an individual in his own setting.

Talking of youngsters being arrested for drinking, I've never forgotten the day when a group of youngsters were brought to the hall for a drinking party, and I remember this one so clearly because they'd all been drinking scotch. It was very seldom that we even had a story of them having scotch to drink. And in the course of our examination, we found that this fourteen-year-old eighth grader had sold two bottles of scotch to the group, that he had gotten the scotch, and they had all "divvied in," I guess, is their expression. As we talked, then, to his parents with him present (and he had already told us a story of how he obtained the scotch, which had just been a falsehood), why, he finally decided to tell the truth, and in front of his parents, told us that he got the scotch from the basement at home. Then the mother very quickly said that, "We do not have any scotch in the basement at home."

And the son just as quickly says, "Hut there are cases of scotch in the basement at home, and that's where I did get it, and it's been there for some time."

So the mother is insistent that we go with them to the home, and she would show us that there was no scotch in their basement. One of the police officers was asked to go along. And he met us at the house, and did go into the house with us. We all went down to the basement, and there were three and a half cases of scotch in the basement. The mother

had no knowledge of it. And I just mention this story because it helped the police clear up a burglary of one of the bars where the father was employed, and the burglary had been reported to the police, and insurance had paid for the burglary, and the scotch was home in the bar owner's basement. So, sometimes, on a little incident, you get involved in a big case, and that, of course, a case of scotch.

Now, as we all know, the law states that no one in Nevada may purchase alcoholic beverages under the age of twenty-one, nor will anyone be furnished alcoholic beverage under the age of twenty-one. Yet we had case after case where not only did the parents furnish the youngsters the alcoholic beverages, but quite often, they themselves were the host and hostess to the party in their home, and they served highballs or cocktails or a variety of mixed drink to their child and his guests or their guests at the home, a birthday, or a graduation party. Or one of the boys' friends was leaving for the military, so they have a going away party. Or we've even been involved in parties where the girls were giving a shower for a girlfriend, and cocktails were served. A good part of the time, the liquor for unauthorized parties, in the absence of the parents, was not purchased; the liquor was obtained at home. We have been told by parents that they didn't see anything wrong with their youngster having a drink or a couple drinks. Or the parents would say, "We know they're going to drink, so we allow them to drink at home so that they learn how to handle drinks." And we have had them say things like this to us: "Well, I don't care what the law is, or what the police say, or what you say. If my youngster wants to have a beer, there's beer in the refrigerator, and he can help himself." "If my son wants some friends of his over for a party and they want a drink, there's liquor in this house, and they may have it."

Of course, there are so many comments and so many articles about youngsters flouting the law. Well, they are taught to flout the law. So often, too, in cases like this, the parents weren't concerned too much, other than the fact that the youngsters had been caught and had been arrested, and then they hoped that there would be no publicity. They really weren't concerned at all as to any problem there might be with the youngster, just how it was going to reflect on their reputation in the community.

From one of the articles in the scrapbook,\* you noticed that in '66 I made the statement in one of my talks in the community that about seventy percent of the cases did involve alcohol in some part of the situation. Of course, most of the time, it would've been the drinking of one or both parents, a lot of the cases the drinking of one or both parents, or heavy drinking of one, or one parent being an alcoholic and the other a heavy drinker and the youngster's following in a similar pattern, drinking and getting drunk. It is rather difficult for a teenage girl to understand when her parents forbid her to take a drink most of the time, she probably knew those parents as either high or drunk or with a hangover, and probably not too much contact with the parents in a sober condition. We had many, many cases like that, and young men where the father was a heavy drinker, maybe the mother was a heavy drinker, too, and then parents directing the young man to not buy beer, and, "Don't drink beer," and, "I don't want you to take a drink," and all that sort of thing, when the example was anything but. And then we even had cases where the youngsters were much happier in the home situation when the parents were drinking or were drunk because then they had a lot more freedom in their coming and going, and a period of sobriety of one or both would make

the children uncomfortable because then they'd start forcing some rules of discipline or observing or learning where the children were or weren't going, so that there were many youngsters in the home situations that were more comfortable when the drinking was going on, or when the parent was involved in a prolonged drunk.

We, again, in this community, have a very liberal attitude on the part of adults drinking. We're a twenty-four-hour town. In the '60's, with this big influx of population, I have made the statement, and I'll make it again now: Not only was and is drinking socially acceptable on the adult level, it's socially acceptable on the college level, and it became, in the '60's, actually socially acceptable on the high school level with a lot of people. In fact, I could say truthfully, too, that a lot of parents actually defied the police and the probation department in their right to be working with these youngsters because of drinking.

Then, as you know and I know, if you become an alcoholic, you are sick, and that it is a sickness, and that the body does demand the alcohol. So then the whole home situation is colored because of that fact. And in some of the homes, some of the cases that I worked with, both parents were alcoholics. In some of the homes, one parent was an alcoholic, and the other parent might not take a drink. In some of the homes, both parents started drinking before dinner with the social, so-called, social drinking, the drink before dinner. But in a lot of the homes, they would have one drink, two drinks, three or more before dinner, a drink during the dinner, and

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\*Scrapbooks of the Probation Department, Special Collections Department, University of Nevada, Reno, Library.



then following dinner, drink themselves into drunkenness. And in a lot of the homes, this was a daily deal.

Some of the youngsters would, as teenagers, have drinking problems, and the parents would deny it emphatically, insist that we were exaggerating, and that they didn't have, and also, "What's wrong with a beer?" But we have had youngsters that appeared in court and were institutionalized because it was the one way that we knew and that the court knew that they would be taken off of alcohol. I only went to court with one that I recall that was fifteen years old and was an alcoholic. But over the years, I did go to court with a number of sixteen-year-old and seventeen-year-old youngsters who had been medically examined, and cases known to medical doctors that their conclusions were that this youngster was a teenage alcoholic.

There were a number of those teenage alcoholics in the Colony, and the Reverend Clyde Mathews and I worked with a number of those youngsters with a team approach. And at that time he was residing—well, on East Second Street, Reservation Road area. And where a small percentage of the Indians in the Colony were involved in serious drinking problems, at times the number of youngsters involved was rather frightening to the Reverend Clyde Mathews and to me.

But there again, that's part of the Indian culture, too. They think—believe—that these young fifteen-year-olds are grown now and able to make their own decisions and wouldn't be too inclined to work with us because the kids were having some drinks. Then, of course, too, where the parents themselves were alcoholics, there wasn't—well, you didn't have the cooperation with either parent to do anything about it. But it was very tragic when a youngster would have to be (and these were boys)—the boys would have to be sent out

to the boys' school because their drinking problem was so serious that that was one way we knew we could get them off of it.

We did have some youngsters, too, that got so involved with glue sniffing that we'd have to place them within an institution where they'd have twenty-four-hour supervision to get them off of glue. Unfortunately, lots of times, when these youngsters did return to the community on a parole basis, they went back to the liquor, and they went back to the glue sniffing. Or if they were home on a furlough, as it's called, or a little vacation of a week or ten days, quite often within the first twenty-four hours of their getting home they would again be sniffing glue or be picked up by the police for drunkenness.

Of course, we had very serious problems with a lot of these youngsters with their drinking because a lot of them had cars, and the drinking-driving combination is one of the most serious problems, whether it be on a child or an adult level. The age really isn't the major factor if the driver is drunk because a young drunk driver can kill, just the same as an older drunk driver. We have had a number of deaths in this community because the boy or girl at the wheel of the automobile was drunk. I remember one incident where the group had been out to Pyramid Lake, and on their returning to Reno the driver crashed the car and killed one little girl and put the other one in Washoe Medical Center who lived on and on in Washoe Medical in a coma—I think lived seven years in Washoe Medical in a coma.

A probation officer today would tell you that they have quite similar problems with the narcotics, that the parent that doesn't see anything wrong with smoking grass will probably have a youngster, too, who doesn't see, even though it's a felony offense with the law, anything wrong in smoking grass. And,



as we all know, there is much advertising of alcoholic beverages—TV, radio, the billboards, the newspapers—and it generally shows it as a perfectly acceptable social situation. We haven't gotten into that in the drug scene yet, but at the same time, there are a lot of ads, again, in reference to pills. If you can't sleep, take a pill. If you can't sleep, take two Sominex. If you can't sleep, take this, take that. If you have a headache, take a pill. The kids know, as well as adults, too, that if you want to keep awake, as well as drink coffee, you can take a pill. And taking pills, from all the advertising, would seem to be very socially acceptable. So I think we develop a lot of this by our culture.

Some of the youngsters that were brought to Wittenberg Hall after the summer of '66, when we got into this drug business in the community, were taking pills that they got in the medicine cabinets from their own homes. Possibly the mother or father at the time was taking diet pills, or seconal, nembutal, tranquilizers, or the Empirin-codeine combination. And if you take a half a dozen pills, mixing them, one of the red and one of the yellow and two of the green, you can end up quite a mess.

I've seen the police bring them to Wittenberg Hall and take them into the room we call the holding room, where there's a place for them to wait until the staff can check them in. I've seen those young girls (this was generally with girls) lying on the floor because they couldn't sit, they could not stand, they could not walk. Also, they really didn't know, some of them at different times, where they were, or where they'd been. Sometimes they had been smoking pot, sometimes they hadn't. Sometimes they had been sniffing glue and then smoking pot, or had been smoking pot and then sniff glue. Or maybe they had been smoking pot and then took acid, an

LSD trip. Sometimes they would tell us that they had taken one thing when they hadn't; they'd taken another. And sometimes I don't think that they really necessarily knew what they had taken. Of a group of three girls at one time who did (two of them or all three of them said that they were on acid trips), two of the girls did confide in one of the group supervisors later and say that the one girl of the three of them hadn't had any acid at all, that they had only given her Empirin and codeine pills because they didn't have that much acid they wanted to give her any, and besides, they didn't like her that much, and all she had was Empirin and codeine.

Now, I, of course, am not that well trained that I know whether that's all she had or not, but I know that her condition was as much so as any of the other two at the time she was lying on the floor in Wittenberg Hall. Now, if a lot of it is psychological, and if you could [get] in that kind of a state by taking Empirin and codeine, I don't know. But I say, from appearance's sake, I would have thought that they were all on the same deal.

The "uppers and the "downers" got to be popular with a lot of the youngsters, and a lot of them were taking "uppers" and "downers" at the same time. Now, I understand that that is a very, very serious problem for the central nervous system. And I understand that it's physically damaging. I am told that that is still going on in this community today. Apparently, there are a lot of youngsters, still, that are using methadone, and apparently we have quite a large number of youngsters in the area now, too, who have gone on to using heroin or cocaine or morphine, or a combination of the different things.

I have made the statement in talks to PTA groups and others that for many, many years, the one common factor with most of these youngsters was the misuse of alcohol in the

home. I imagine it's still very true of a lot of the family situations in the area. I know that the misuse of narcotics could not do anything but create problems as serious or more serious in the home than the misuse of alcohol. I will not say that smoking a joint is necessarily harmful to the individual because I don't know that. I smoked tobacco for many years myself, not knowing what I do know now. But to the best of my knowledge, there's been no released information yet in the research of the use of marijuana, that there are conclusions that are valid. When the youngsters tell me that it's beautiful and that it isn't habit-forming and the rest of it, apparently those statements are true in their thinking.

I have prejudice in my thinking, and can't help but have, because, number one, if you're arrested for having it in your possession or you are selling it, it's a felony offense. But I think a lot of young people use grass (or marijuana) because they believe that it's safer to use than tobacco. I cannot say, because I don't know, that because you use marijuana that you're more apt to use acid. I don't know that. I don't know if that's true or not.

But I can say this, that an awful lot of the youngsters that were referred to us first smoked marijuana and then tried acid. Most of them first smoked marijuana and then went to the different kinds of pills. I know that a lot of them, of these young teenagers, that were sniffing glue or smoking pot or dropping pills, were not using alcohol for a period of time. Then we got into another bit of a deal where they were smoking pot and drinking wine. And some of them were poppin' pills and drinking wine. I don't know what the correlation [is], or if there is a correlation. But a lot of these youngsters will experiment with almost anything. And you know, too, that different materials have been claimed would make kids high. They believe they could get

high on banana peel, they believe they could get hit on nutmeg, and they believe that they could get high on morning glory seeds. I don't personally know whether they can or can't. But I do know that it's very serious.

But I also know this, that in the period of twenty years that I was in the probation department that I probably became involved in more cases in our community because of the misuse of alcohol than for any other single reason. In some families, with grandparents in the community, one or both grandparents were alcoholics. One or both parents were alcoholics. The children were involved in the use of alcohol. For a long time, we had groups of youngsters brought because they were on a beer bust out at Pyramid Lake, or they were on a beer bust up at Lake Tahoe, at Sand Point, or whatever the beach is there. And youngsters would be on the bill up in the back of Bowers with a keg, and they were out at the end of Seventh Street with a keg, and they were out on Dry Lake with a keg.

We had a lot of calls because of parents complaining that, "What about the people that were selling them the beer or the wine or both?" The youngsters learned that they could say to the police officers, "Well, we stopped a wino on Commercial Row and gave him fifty cents. He went and bought it for us." Most of these young people knew older people that would buy it for them, and many of them could buy it themselves. There were stores that would sell a regular six pack of beer. That was sold over the counter to adults for \$1.19, to young people for \$3.00, or \$4.00, or \$5.00.

And we tried a little gimmick once over at the Traner Junior High School, and with the consent of the people involved, the youngsters were given permission to leave the school and were given the money to purchase. The understanding was that there would be no questions asked as to where it was obtained.

Several of us said that they could, even though they were just in junior high, obtain it. None of us that said it thought or believed that it would be as easy as it turned out to be. Because in far less time than we had anticipated, they were back to the school with a six pack of beer, a gallon jug of wine, a fifth of bourbon, or a fifth of vodka, or whatever they had personally decided to buy. They did purchase it, and they brought it back to school.

And I say, there were a number of places where they could get it as long as they had the money to pay for it. They might pay \$3.98 for a ninety-eight-cent jug of wine, or as I said, three dollars for a \$1.19 six pack of beer, but they could get it. And they did. They were back in very short order.

The youngsters were chosen especially because of their young appearance. By the farthest stretch of the imagination, no one could have selected those youngsters, any of them, for looking older than, say, fifteen or sixteen, at the most. Yet all of them, boys and girls, went in the community and came back with, as I say, anything they wanted to buy.

We couldn't do anything about following through on those particular cases because we had told them that we wouldn't ask questions as to where they purchased it. A lot of them got the liquor at home. A lot of them, too, especially through the '60's, knew that they could call on the telephone and have it delivered to the residence. And generally, it was delivered in a cab. They would, if they were afraid to go to the door themselves, have somebody else go to the door to receive it and pay for it. And there again, I said, it was a matter of having the money. If they had sufficient money to pay for it and to pay the cab driver and a tip for the cab driver, why, there were no questions asked, and, of course, they always conveniently forgot which cab company they called, or the name. And

they didn't remember which place they had called. It made it very difficult to pinpoint a lot of them. Then once in a while, you'd have somebody that would just be scared enough, maybe, of what his folks were going to say or do—or she would be—that they'd blurt out, "well, it was obtained there," and by whom and for how much.

Then the youngsters would have friends working here and there that would make it easier for them to obtain beer and wine and what not, too. But as you know, you can get it in any one of the grocery stores. You can get it in most drug stores. You can get it in regular liquor businesses. In not too many of the casinos can the under twenty-one obtain liquor. They're, on the whole, very, very careful about serving a minor. Of course, kids have false ID's, and some youngsters do look older, and they would convince store clerks that they were older, but most of them that I ever worked with didn't any more look twenty-one than I did. But it's very easy to obtain.

Apparently, in this community, right today, too, it's very easy to obtain narcotics. [In] some instances, according to what the youngsters tell me, you can buy it right on the school grounds, right within the school building. Other cases, you can buy it off the school grounds but near the school. You can buy it in the downtown area in the vicinity of the five and dime, the vicinity of the Mapes Hotel. And apparently all it takes is just—you have to have the money.

I still have contact with a family that I have worked with and helped over the years. And the father was an alcoholic, is an alcoholic. Really, he's a falling-down drunk [laughing] in just as many ways as he is an alcoholic. He has never held a job except for a very short period of time. The mother supports the family, and—like she did have some

financial assistance through our department from private donations. In fact, I will still, on occasion, help her with a grocery order. I still help her on occasion with articles of clothing. The Reno Union of the WCTU has spent a lot of money for the youngsters that have been in that family over the years to be able to enroll in school in the fall, to be properly dressed. Almost all of the children in the family are functioning well in the community. None of them have a drinking problem. The mother totally abstains. But all of the family, I think, have a special kind of pity and sympathy and understanding of that drunken individual that's their father in that home. He's never physically abusive to them. He's never physically abusive to the mother. He's generally sitting in a chair asleep, or he's in bed. Sometimes he's on the floor asleep. Sometimes he might be out in the garage in the car, asleep. Warm weather, he might be out in the back yard on the lawn, asleep. He sleeps an awful lot [laughing]. I don't laugh that it's funny, I just laugh that—it's a situation where it's years and years and years and years he's continued to do all of this drinking and still seems to have quite good health, and [laughing] it doesn't seem to be too harmful to him.

I think most chief probation officers, though, that have been in a community for any length of time would say as I have, that it is true when you state that the one, single factor that you'll find so many of the homes have in common is the misuse of alcohol.

A former probation officer in the Washoe County Probation Department, who's now working on her MSW at Fresno State, had a girl assigned who was brought in and arrested because of narcotic involvement. And for a number of days the girl's screams and crying and hollering, all of it, could be heard at Washoe Medical from Wittenberg

Hall. Of course, the probation officer was having assistance from the family physician and from a psychologist in private practice during this period. Finally, when the girl was down from the trip and the probation officer could start working with her, the probation officer learned that she had been, for weeks and weeks, hiding out in the Haight-Ashbury area. And in not too long a time, actually, the probation officer had established quite a good working relationship with her.

Then one day, in the office end of the building, right by my office, actually, for a reason that the probation officer never had knowledge of, the girl suddenly turned on her again. Now, we were, neither of us, well enough informed with the narcotics picture at that time as to whether she might have been on a bad trip. We didn't know that. But she started again screaming, and she started calling this probation officer (and I think it's the most miserable of all expressions that she started calling this woman) "mother fucker," and then ran from her office to get back into the hall, and she called her that word about seven times before I could get to the door and get her through, and the place was jam packed.

I mention that because it was the kind of conduct, that later, would have been just as foreign to this little girl, and I'm sure, had we had a tape, that she still would have denied that it was her voice on the tape. And I say, at a later time, she would not have been able to believe that under any circumstances she was the one who had said what she did say, and a number of times between two doors that were just a few feet apart.

Because the girl did not seem to be able to discipline herself, and with the complete support of the mother, the girl was placed in the home of the Good Shepherd in San Francisco. She was there for a very extended

period of time. There was there, I think, a little bit more or just under three calendar years. I think it was just under; I think she was there about thirty-four months. Of course, being in the Good Shepherd home, she wouldn't have drugs available to her. But now she's been out for a long enough period of time, too, that, to date, to the best of knowledge of the people still working with the girl, she has not gone back to any use of any narcotics, and apparently is getting along very well. But so many of them, really, conduct themselves in a way that they can't even believe that they're the people involved.

How, it affects, apparently, different individuals very differently. You and I could smoke the same joint and it affect you and maybe not affect me at all. How it might affect you, you wouldn't know until you tried it. It wouldn't necessarily affect you the same way the second time. All right, some of these pills apparently affect them differently, too, and apparently the acid affects them differently. And I only had experience with one bad trip that we knew it was a bad trip. This time it was a boy. He had been in Wittenberg Hall a little bit longer than two weeks when he went on this bad trip. And it took a number (I want to say six; it might've been four) of the large members of the group supervisors to get him onto a gurney and into the ambulance and on his way to the state hospital. I never have heard anything like it in my life. I've never witnessed anything like it in my life. Now, I'm quoting the state hospital superintendent, that he told the probation officer of that young man later that the people working with him believed the story that he gave them eventually, that this boy now "believed that he was being beat into the ground with baseball bats." Now, of course, I say I don't know. That's hearsay. But that's what the hospital superintendent reported, that he had been

on a bad trip, that he had taken acid about three or four weeks before he had the bad trip. And I say, in all my years and everything I've seen, I've never heard or observed anything like it. But that's the only bad trip, if it was a bad trip, that I've observed. So I can't make any kind of a comparison, and I don't know about it. But if I can say that if it was a bad trip, that—well, I wouldn't want to have to be involved with them very often. I don't think I could take it. I can understand his concern, though, if he believed that he was being beat into the ground with baseball bats.

This narcotic involvement with the young people, there is a lot of reasons for and why. It's gotten all involved with certain things and certain individuals that included the Beatles, that included other rock groups. It was big in the Haight-Ashbury area. And I would have to say this, that they really took to the whole philosophy of it, hook, line, and sinker. The youngsters that we were acquainted with were much less willing to work with a probation officer if there was a narcotic involvement than almost anything else, and I think that we were not successful with most to influence or help them at all. Most of them would tell us, "I won't get caught again, but I'm not going to stop using." Or, "I will continue to smoke pot." Or, "I like acid, and I don't see anything wrong with it, and I will continue to use it."

I can't help but feel that a lot of them are probably very much into the drug scene if they're not using heroin, because I am told that they are now using. And apparently, we had one death of a young man from an overdose of [it]. But it's not unique in this community. It's pretty much all over, more so one place than another, but I would have to admit that apparently, Washoe County now has a serious problem in the drug scene at the high school level, some at the junior high level, and apparently some at the college level.



I made the statement once that if either of my own children ever got involved with heroin that I'd rather see them dead. I was then going by what I had seen with adults that were hooked on heroin. Now, I haven't seen any of the youngsters who had been or were using heroin that I have knowledge of. So that would be something new for me to experience.

They have had, of course, since the late '60's, a large number of commitments with drug involvement. They're quite difficult cases. In fact, personally, I think the youngsters involved in narcotics are more difficult in the probation and the institutional setting than any of the others; at least, that's my personal feeling. An awful lot of these young people, from what I observed, were very well indoctrinated into the drug culture, and the squares, the establishment (which includes probation officers generally, in their thinking) knew nothing about it; what they would discuss wasn't accurate or truthful, that it was beautiful and that they liked it, and they intended to continue using drugs. They might not get caught, but they would use.

They watched for an opportunity to get out of the institution, as they Watched for the opportunity in their own community to get out of the community, and for a long time they were attracted like bees to honey to the Haight-Ashbury area in San Francisco. And these twelve-, thirteen-, fourteen-, fifteen-, sixteen-year-old girls were, in most instances, able to hide out in the Haight-Ashbury area for long periods of time. Some of them would be gone a year or two, three. They would give birth to illegitimate children during that period. They would go, many of them, from the smoking of the grass to the using of acid to the use of "speed" to the uppers, downers, the pep and the depressant pill, some of them using them in conjunction,

taking them together. And they lived a stoned kind of life. They became acquainted with a lot of the practices that seemed to be quite acceptable to them of homosexual practices and heterosexual group sex of five, six, seven, or more, taking turns. They wouldn't know who they were pregnant by; they wouldn't know, necessarily, who they'd acquired the venereal disease from. They lived, a lot of it, from hand to mouth. Those that had, shared, and they did beg on the street, along with everything else. These young girls, during the time of the Haight-Ashbury bit, too, would become pregnant by the blacks and did give birth to those children with black fathers. Those children are very difficult to place for adoption. Not too many people, still, today, are willing to accept the responsibility that goes with assisting a child of mixed parentage. Agencies in that area did try to assist to the best of their ability.

Girls that were in the Haight-Ashbury area from this county were generally found by family members who went into the area themselves, looking for the youngsters. Once in a while, one would get discouraged and turn himself in. But it is, and was, and probably will continue to be for some time, a very serious problem for the communities. I personally found it very, very difficult to work with these youngsters, more so than anything else over all the years—in fact, more so than all the other things combined.

#### **VENEREAL DISEASE**

Along that line, over the years in the probation department here in Washoe County, we would have an occasional boy who would ask for help because he had contracted venereal disease, and I mean very occasional. We might have one or two in a year, or maybe another year with three or four. We got into



the drug scene, and we would have four or five in a week, and girls as well as boys. And if there were girls who had contracted a venereal disease prior to, say, 1966, with our department, we never had knowledge of it. They certainly weren't held in detention with venereal diseases. Now, I say some might have had, and had assistance from private doctors or gone out of the city for medical help, but we had no knowledge of it.

I had to learn from some of these teenage girls at Wittenberg Hall that not only can you have one, but you can have two venereal diseases at the same time, or three, because we had girls in custody that did have three at one time. We had girls who had had gonorrhea and syphilis for a period of weeks and a period of months and had not sought medical assistance. The statistics here with our VD clinic wouldn't show the numbers as I'm putting them on this tape, because a lot of these girls were from families who could afford to not have to go to a clinic. And a lot of them, because they were embarrassed by this (and these were mostly from upper middle class families), they went elsewhere for treatment. I don't know to whom, and I don't necessarily know to where, but I know that the parents did arrange for the medical attention for their children. They would inform us that the treatments had been completed. Some of these youngsters, we would learn, say, in May, that treatment had been received and they were free of VD, and in June it would come to our attention again that they [laughing] were not free from.

### **SUMMARY OF CASE WORK**

Anyway, I would want to say, also, that where there were lots of very, very serious cases, and, of course, there were many cases that were not of a very serious nature and

would be of short duration and that would be easy, and, sometimes, some of them very pleasant. The youngster might come in for something as simple as cutting a half day of school and while cutting school was downtown in a theater or in one of the stores, and maybe one of the group did a little—well, the police booked them as petty thefts, but it's shoplifting.

But we'd get acquainted with the parents and get acquainted with the home situation, and the parents would have been just as surprised as anyone could possibly be, that their youngster was one of this group, behaving in that particular manner, and would not only be very shocked, but so completely concerned. And their conversation with me would be, "Well, what do you suggest?" Or, "We're doing thus and so. Do you think we should do—?" Oh, like the way they're disciplining the child, "Do you think we should do differently?" Or, "We want to listen to any and every suggestion you might make," and, "We want everything the best possible—everything for our youngster, and we're starting right now," and—you know.

Then, even though in lots of the cases, whether they were mine or another probation officer, the parents would be so grateful that we had given a hand and that they were free to call when they wanted or to come to the office and have an appointment when they wanted. And, of course, in those days, the early days, too, with so many of them, the case load wasn't such that—we probably made as many home visits as we did have office calls. But it was a friendly, compatible, happy kind of a case work situation. And a lot of those very nice people have stayed very friendly. A lot of them eventually became acquainted with my family, and call on the phone, and send Christmas cards, and—you know, that sort of thing. So where there was lots of tragedy

and lots of unhappiness with so many of the cases, I say there were a lot of cases that were very pleasant. Even though you're supposed to remain completely objective with everything with cases, still, as I say, a lot of these people became my very good friends, and are today.

A lot of the youngsters and their parents that I got acquainted with over the years came into the picture again when they read in the paper that I had filed for county commissioner, and were very quick to assure me of their support and their vote, and that they would certainly be talking to their friends, and so forth and so on. So there was much that was very satisfying. On the whole, I would have to still say, though, that it was a very difficult, a very mean job, I think probably one of the saddest kinds of jobs that an individual could have because most of the time it was with heartache and sorrow and tragedy, and many sad, sad things.

Over the years, we were always very much concerned with our runaway children, both those residing here running from the community, and those who left their homes in other areas and came into this community, and oftentimes so very young. we would have a bulletin out for a nine- or ten- or eleven or twelve-year-old youngster, and then we'd get teletypes where they were in custody in San Francisco, or they were in custody in Los Angeles. And lots of adults are even reticent to go into strange areas [laughing] or large urban areas, and here these little youngsters, without too many qualms, would sometimes buy the bus tickets into the areas, and more often hitchhike. Some of them would actually get along quite well over a period of quite a few weeks, or even a number of months. Some of them would get into other violations of the law. But I can think of a number of girls who would run away and get positions of carhop or a theater usher, or, oh, maybe working as

a kitchen helper, or maybe a maid in a motel. And, of course, as you know, many of them would look older and would falsify ages, and all that sort of thing.

But they would get the employment, and they would have the job. And then maybe the employer would tumble, that maybe this youngster—there was more to the story than they knew. Or maybe when they got a little better acquainted with the youngster, maybe the youngster'd confide in them then that he was a runaway, or she was a runaway from Reno. But they'd be located and returned. Then so many of them, too, would say to us, "Well, if you insist that I have to go home, or if the judge sends me home, I won't stay. I'm going to run away again." And, "I won't live there." The children of divorced parents so often, residing with one parent, would run away to try to reach the divorced parent. Children of divorced parents would run away to reach a grandmother or an aunt and an uncle, or an older married sister. When they would tell you that they had no intention to remain where you might place [them], of course, you really couldn't because they generally meant every word of it, and to at least know where they were, you'd have to make a different set of plans to where they would assure, "Well, yes, I will do that," or, "I'll give it a try." And then, oftentimes, they'd say, too, just as matter-of-factly, "Well, I promise you this next time, then, I won't run away. If I don't want to stay, well, I'll come tell you."

Then, some of them would have very unhappy experiences, too, in their running, so that they themselves became fearful about trying it a second time. Or maybe they'd tried it several times and got along all right, and then maybe it was the fifth time that they, themselves, would make the decision that, "Better not try that again. It was pretty rough this last time." And unfortunately, there

are those people on the highway, as there are people in theaters and public parks and public toilets, that are on the lookout for these young people. Some of them would have very horrible experiences.

We've had them, I guess, in the probation department over the twenty years from almost every state in the union, if not all, even from the Hawaiian Islands, youngsters getting on a plane and then starting out cross-country and hitting Reno because of geographic location when they were endeavoring to reach some other state. Quite often, we would have the youngsters brought to us.

After we had the detention home, the police would bring these runaways (and this was long before the barefoot time, now, of the new culture), and a lot of these youngsters would have just (the girls) maybe a blouse and skirt as their full attire. Maybe they'd have a little luggage with something in it; quite often, they wouldn't have that. Sometimes the girl would have just a purse, and in that, why, it was lipstick and maybe a little coin purse with a little money, and generally, cigarettes. If they didn't have much of anything else, they'd have a package or a part-package of cigarettes. And sometimes even in the cold weather, we'd get these barefooted youngsters. When arrangements would be made to return them to out-of-state places, fortunately, we had these private funds, primarily from the Reno Union of the WCTU, and we would purchase underclothing and socks or hose for the girls and put a pair of shoes (generally, the Keds in the summertime, and what not, but wintertime, try to put a good pair of shoes on them), and a sweater, jacket, or coat—really, whatever was necessary, so that they could travel at least decently covered and warm. Sometimes, these youngsters' parents or other jurisdictions would wire plane tickets for them, or make arrangements for plane

transportation. And actually, sometimes, where we'd be very short of funds, we would still have to buy clothes for them, whether we could afford it or not, just so that they would be accepted aboard a plane. And—oh, like I say, some of them did have a few possessions. Generally, they were in a cardboard box. So we did collect lots of secondhand luggage, too, from people that had old luggage that they had no use for any more, so that [we could] put them aboard a plane or a bus or something with a little piece of luggage rather than a cardboard box. We tried always to impress these youngsters that we were interested in what they did do, and that we didn't want them in difficulty with the law, and, too, try to show them that there were people who understood and were concerned. I think we did a lot of good case work with runaways.

We had one youngster from New York City that would be out here and apprehended. we'd arrange to get him back to New York City; in a few months, here he'd be again. He'd traveled the country several times. Once he'd been out here, I guess, quite a few weeks and then ran out of money and didn't want to be arrested again, turned himself in at Wittenberg Hall with a remark like, "Well, here I am again. Please get me home.

I don't know just what the percentage of cases right now is of runaways, but I don't imagine it's any less than what it's been over the years. In fact, it could still be more because there are so many, many young people on the road today. It probably reached its peak in the late '60's, and maybe it hasn't, too, because I haven't checked with them just recently about the number of runaways. Maybe they're even getting more now than we were getting in the late '60's. I would hear from other probation officers in the other western states that the runaways were one of their large problems and that they had so many. Even

the cold winter weather didn't prevent the youngsters from running either out or into the community, but it always did slow it up. Then some youngsters, maybe when they felt more footloose and fancy-free during the summer months, get back in the school situation, would be comfortable enough in the school situation to hang on, because they could go from their home (if that's where the unhappiness was) to school and spend most of their day there. So it would slow up during the school months some. And then just as soon as spring would start again and the weather getting better and they'd get a little [laughing] restless in school, why, then, away we'd go again.

A couple of weeks ago, I was asked to talk to a sorority group in Carson City, and they wanted me to talk about the children as they were in the early years of when I was in the probation department, the early '50's, and then when I left the department in the late '60's. And I explained to the group that the children were very much the same, except that the changes were from—as society had changed, and they were being arrested for different offenses. And then I might say this, too (I did say it to them), that if anything, in just that short span of time, the children were much more knowledgeable in the late '60's than even in the early '50's. And in the early '50's they were very knowledgeable, very bright, and very alert. I told them that part of that was explained with TV, bringing the world into the living room. I said that in the early years, we had many youngsters referred for drinking, which generally involved beer drinking, and that in the late '60's, we were getting youngsters in the drug scene, pot and acid, and other misuse of drugs, and not as much involved with the leading drug problem in the country, which is alcohol. And I told them about the millions of alcoholics in this

country today. Of course, there weren't as many in the early '50's, but the arrests were for different things. But the youngsters as a whole are pretty much the same, that they hadn't changed that much. It was the offense that was changing.

In my own personal opinion, I think that the youngsters in the junior highs today are probably the most knowledgeable group that we have ever had of any society because most of them are very well read, they're exposed to all kinds of reading, they have the radio, and they have TV, and they're exposed to all kinds of programming on TV. I think that where a lot of it is educational and a lot of it is wonderful to watch, there still is considerable emphasis on violence. There is considerable emphasis on drugs, being that we are in a drug scene today. And where most of the youngsters are able to make good or right decisions, as we look at it, for themselves from all this exposure, there are some who are not able to, and I think that they are very much influenced by TV, by magazines, by books, by records, by music groups, by the new hippie culture. But I think they are very aware of their world, and I think they are very aware of the total scene, the total world. They aren't, like the early years when I taught school, living in a little agricultural small town community, and everything's happening elsewhere. They know what's going on, and they do think about it, and they are just very, very knowledgeable.

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## WITTENBERG HALL IN THE PROBATION SYSTEM

### PROMOTION AND BUILDING

It was suggested to me by one of the staff from the National Probation and Parole Association (now NCCD) that I go to the service clubs in the community and tell them of the need for a detention facility. And I did. I was asked to speak at all of the service clubs. Some of the service clubs, I went as often as I could get an invitation. And I would say this, that they were always very much interested. They gave me encouragement to go ahead with the plans in the community. But when it came right down to the nittygritty, and when I needed their membership at other meetings, they weren't there. And where they all were very complimentary on the talk that I had delivered, it didn't bring about results. For quite a few months, I concentrated my efforts in that area. Some very good things did come out of it. For example, the Optimist Club did help a lot of the youngsters individually, and did sponsor programs. And Kiwanis Club did give the department a lot of assistance with individual youngsters. But the very

large membership in Rotary, and the large membership in the Lions clubs, and other service clubs and lodges, they were interested, but they just did not participate in a program to bring it about.

Then I was invited to speak to a small church group, a women's study group. I think there was about—oh, there were eight or ten women present. And after the meeting, in talking with them individually, I realized that, most likely, it would be the women that would really help to get a detention home. So then I moved into PTA talks. There would be some men in attendance at the meetings, but they were primarily women. And it was generally the women who would talk to me after the meeting. And so often, they not only showed their real interest, but they said to me, "Mr. Nelson, I am in the directory. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, please call me."

And I did start calling these people. They talked to their friends, in church groups, other PTA groups, other organizations. Without their being aware of it, and really, without me being aware of how well it was being done,



they did lay a foundation in Washoe County for the acceptance of the philosophy of getting children out of jail and building and operating a good detention home.

The PTA, at the time of the bond issue, had telephone calling committees. They not only had the lists of the people to call, but they did call. If the phone wasn't answered, they called again. And they continued to call until they did contact the person. They were able to do it well enough that when the bonds appeared on the ballot, we had, and did receive, almost a three to one majority.

As you also already know, the detention home, when it was finally opened for children in 1961, was named for Helen Wittenberg. And I can tell you at this point the whys. Helen was serving on the Washoe County grand jury prior to 1949, and she visited the old city jail that was at the corner of First and Center for those many years. She saw a little nine-year-old locked up in a cell, and it bothered her so much that she joined with others in securing for the state of Nevada a juvenile court law. And even though it was introduced in the legislature by E. Frandsen Loomis and others, Helen was always in the background as one of the prime movers for better legislation for children. Because Helen was also the first president of the Women's Auxiliary to the Washoe County Bar Association after its formation in this community, and because she was also the first president of the League of Women Voters in this—I guess they're chapters, are they not?—the Washoe County chapter, and because Helen had also been very active in PTA work in this community—it was all those things together, that when we were talking about the detention home and a name was mentioned for the home, and I had been giving it very serious thought, anyway, for my part of it. I don't know if the committee or the judges would even give me an opportunity

to even make a suggestion or anything. But I say on my own, I was giving it a lot of serious thought. And so I did, with the assistance of Mr. Bruce Bowen, submit, I think he called it a resolution for the naming. But he did do the wording correctly for me. I proposed that the detention facility be named for Helen.

We had talked about the jail holding and how unsatisfactory it was in all phases. We started talking about recruiting foster homes for at least the young children. We weren't very successful in recruiting foster homes because we didn't have the money to do a newspaper campaign. So many people really didn't understand what we wanted, and the word "delinquent" frightened them. And in those early years, there was very much publicity about the pachucos, and there was a lot of newspaper publicity as to beer busts and to thefts of hub caps to car thefts to burglaries. Because we were unable to educate the community as well as we should have, the response was minimal. I can say at this same time that, over all of the twenty years that I was in the department, there were very few good foster homes in this immediate area, and we placed children in foster homes, even in California. We had a good one for a period of time in Bridgeport, California. We had several very good ones in Churchill County. We had a ranch home placement in Dixie Valley. And unless I'm mistaken, the one in Dixie Valley is still being used by the probation department.

A lot of local foster homes saw the idea, especially of school-age children, of, here's a youngster who can get up in the morning, give him a little breakfast, send him to school, he can have lunch at school, come home after school, have him change his clothes, go outside to play, come in for a little evening meal, go outside to play, bedtime, and wouldn't require too much of anything, and they could even probably make a few



dollars, even though the amounts paid foster parents are small. Most places saw it as some supplemental income, and, of course, with that premise, why, you couldn't be successful.

Anyway, we thought that possibly we could do something with foster homes, and we did very little. We just didn't make any progress whatsoever with the Washoe County commissioners to get them to take any initiative whatsoever to comply with statutes and to at least talk about building a detention home. It was just ignoring appointments and not returning phone calls and not attending meetings, and just completely ignoring the probation department with what became almost pleas for some understanding.

By statute, the commissioners should have had the detention home in operation in 1951; we opened for children February twenty-seventh, 1961. And for several years before we ever did make some positive gains, we, in the department, did do a lot of reading about detention. We did visit detention homes. Attending conferences or other meetings, we would also go see the detention home in that particular area, and I did make a special effort to see the one in Seattle, which had a good reputation, the one in Portland, Oregon, which had a good reputation, the one in Auburn, California because it was a small one. I visited the one in Sacramento. I was familiar with the one in San Joaquin County, in Stockton. I went to see the detention home in San Diego, California. Some of the staff visited other homes. Oh, I did make a special effort to visit the detention home in Denver, Colorado, which, because of Judge (Phillip Brewster) Gilliam, enjoyed a very good reputation, which I discovered wasn't merited. But it did and still does have that kind of a reputation.

I found that a lot of them had imposing physical plants, and some of them had very

attractive grounds. Some of them had very adequate recreation areas. I also found that on the whole, they were little jails, or actually jails, rather than detention homes, and they just had different names. But the jail policy pervaded, and most of the youngsters were locked up. The homes did not have adequate academic programs, they were not complying with the school attendance regulations, they had very inadequate arts and crafts programs. Recreation was something listed and yet something that was not carried out. I found that lots of the staff in the detention homes was punitive. They were very critical of the youngsters. They name-called, they belittled, they berated, they stood in judgment, all of those things that are not a part of a good rehabilitation program.

I was always so very grateful that I had the opportunity to visit the homes, and I did have the opportunity to read, and I had a lot of help from the National Probation and Parole Association. They were very good about sending me the right kinds of literature that would help. When it finally got to the point that we were talking about building plans, they were most helpful in furnishing sample plans for us to study.

I did know that I had the complete support of the committee, that if and when we did build a detention home in compliance with the law, the emphasis would be that this would be a detention home that was a proper holding facility for children, that there would be an academic program (a classroom situation), that there would be tutoring of children (that we would do the necessary work in remedial reading and to help the youngsters in all of the subjects we could), so that when they left detention, they would be better able to return to the public school classroom. I knew that I had their full support for a good indoor and outdoor recreation program.

Even though it did entail a lot of discussion, we also were finally agreed that we would not try to cut in the area of food for children, that we would serve the very best possible meals that we could serve, that the meals would be planned ahead, that they would follow diet requirements, that the youngsters would have milk to drink, fresh vegetables, fresh fruits, and that they would have meat at as many meals as we could possibly afford. I don't mean in any way that we were going to waste the taxpayers' dollar, but we were going to provide good food, that we would employ good cooks, and cooks who would be understanding of children and the arrested child, and they would be able to help them. Over the years, we did do all of those things, and if I can't say anything else, I can say this about our detention home: it has always been a very decent place for children.

In one of the detention homes in California, I had been given a personally conducted tour by the director of the detention home. And I liked everything I saw. I was impressed with the way the director explained the operation of their detention homes. It was very clean. I did see them serve one meal, and the food looked fine. Then that afternoon, because the director had another appointment, he asked me to wait in one of the rooms for a few minutes, that he would return. While waiting in that room, over the intercom (and, of course, it was because wrong buttons had been pushed) I heard one group supervisor say to another, "Get that little bastard ready for court. We have to leave in just a few minutes." And I, again, was very much disillusioned about detention.

The League of Women Voters, interested as they are in all facets of local government, became very concerned when they learned that the county commissioners were ignoring the statute, that children were continuing to

be held in jail, and that, really, the directive was there and so clearly spelled out, and these people wanted to know why. Also, they felt that it would be helpful to the probation department and the courts if they were to make a study of the conditions of jail holding, that where they felt that I was so personally involved in the reports that I'd made that this would be a completely objective kind of report, and by a group of citizens not directly involved.

They did make a study of jail holding in Washoe County and published; they were mimeographed copies, and not a very professional, finished product, as we think of so many of the studies as they come out in printed form today. But it was a marvelous report in that it had facts and figures that could not be disputed. Then that study was circulated through the community, primarily through PTA groups. But they did reach interested parents, and they did reach other individuals in the community, too, so that a lot of the service clubs were making inquiry about this study. So then I got on another circuit of speeches discussing the study with the service clubs and with PTAs and the rest of it. But it was probably one of the positive steps that took us to the conclusion of having detention.

Also, in those years, Washoe County was just starting, really, in this population explosion, getting some of the waves from the state of California. People were starting to move in here, and our schools, for the first time in many years, started to face a problem of overcrowding. And a group of young women in the community, concerned about their children in starting school, became very, very concerned about classroom space and room for kindergarten and first grade. Well, a lot of those endeavors, then, to a degree, merged. Some of the same

women concerned with the school situation concerned themselves also with detention and jail holding. And a lot of the same telephone committees eventually worked for promotion of the bond issue for the detention home. I can't remember just the exact time now, but there was sufficient community pressure that the county commissioners did direct me to get some figures for construction of a detention home.

I was in contact with the National Probation and Parole Association, which is now the National Council on Crime and Delinquency. I asked for their expert assistance and received it. And we started to get drawings and blueprints of very small, of medium-sized, of large detention homes. I started talking to some of the local contractors. I talked to local architects. We got to looking at possibilities of property for the location of a detention home. And things did finally shape up to where I could say to the county commissioners, "Building costs in the area and projected costs now are running twelve, thirteen, fourteen dollars a square foot. About the time we would get to construction, they'll probably be, from what the contractors tell me, in the neighborhood of fifteen, sixteen dollars a square foot." And when we got into construction in '60, that's just exactly what the building did cost. It was between fifteen and sixteen dollars a square foot.

For the size of the facility—and we were encouraged to build a small facility—I mean, a small facility in the amount of bed space, but do have an indoor recreation area, do have a library area, do include a schoolroom area for an academic and arts and crafts program and the rest of it. Do include a gymnasium, have a walk-in cooler, have as modern a kitchen as you construct, have a laundry, have it commercial size. And I mean, we were

really talking about specifics. From the studies made and what not, it was suggesting that we would need funds not too far from \$400,000. But because \$300,000 sounds better than \$400,000, we got to talking \$350,- \$375,000, but we were very careful not to use the figure of \$400,000 at all, even though we felt that it could come pretty close to \$400,000 for the construction and the furnishing and to get in operation.

Then came the day when I picked up either a morning or evening paper (I don't remember which) and saw that the sum of money for the bond issue was \$200,000. Of course, I was completely bypassed, as was the probation committee, as was the court in reaching that amount. How it was resolved, I never did learn. [Laughing] I, really, to this day, don't know. The assistant district attorney at that time, who was given the responsibility to take care of the legal work of this bonding, told me that he was directed by the county commissioners for the amount of \$200,000. And, of course, the man was doing his job.

So, anyway, that stalled things again because we knew, then, in discussing things, so much would be deleted that we would have a facility, really, that we'd rather live without than live with. So then, the next session of the legislature (and that would have been the '59 session of the legislature), a number of us had to talk to, of course, our local delegations and to the others on a statewide basis, explaining to them our situation in Washoe County. (Of course, Clark County, the only other area with a large population, had built their detention home according to statute and had been in operation all of these years. And on the whole, it was a good operation.) But anyway, the legislature did, upon the recommendation of our local delegation, pass legislation giving us an additional \$75,000, which brought us up to \$275,000, and that's the money we had. We

had had indications, though, that local groups would assist, too, with furnishing, and what not. So we moved ahead with the knowledge of \$275,000.

Then we went into many meetings and discussions as to location. And Washoe County does have and still does have what is known as the Washoe County Fairgrounds, which is, actually, state property and under lease to Washoe County. Part of that area was considered as a possible site. In fact, the southeast section was right off of Sutro. There was a site out near Dickerson Road that was proposed and given considerable consideration. Then some of the property owners in the area had sites that they proposed to sell to the county. Put because we would need every dime that we were to have from the bonds for the construction, we didn't really have any money to buy land, so we concentrated our efforts in land already held by the county. Then, because of the exceedingly wonderful, far-sighted thoughtfulness on the part of the hospital board at that time (and where we hadn't gotten into the expansion program that's at present with Washoe Medical Center), they very generously offered the southeast section of county property bordering Mill Street, and Wittenberg Hall was constructed at that site. It was sufficient acreage to give us a very adequate, fenced play area for the building that we could build at that time, and also sufficient space that it could be remodeled at a future date (which, as you know, is going on right now). There is a bit of a problem with parking, but there is a bit of a problem with parking with almost any building today.

But it worked out very, very well. It is near all of the law enforcement agencies. It is farthest, of course, for the Sparks people for transportation, but very convenient to the Reno Police Department, who bring most

of the children, convenient for the Washoe County sheriff's office, very convenient for staff, for the children going to court, and for our business in the courthouse. Actually, on the whole, it's proven to be a very, very satisfactory location. We all were more than pleased when that land became available. In fact, it was one of the bright spots of (laughing) a lot of years of discouraging manipulations and maneuvers.

Of course, the final okay had to come from the county commissioners, and, again, I think it was because of community pressure that they felt that they had to go along with the location, although, again, they did it very reluctantly. (But they also, not too much later, very quickly, without a bond issue, put a health and welfare building on the Kirman-East Second Street corner—and I said that was done without a bond issue.) Lockard and Casazza were employed as the architects. And when it went to bid, the Sam Sabini Construction Company was the low bidder. Of course, with the basic plan, there were additives that, depending upon costs and what-not at bidding time, we would build this, that, and the other. Then, of course, really, instead of additives, we got into the process of deletions.

One of the things that was very quickly deleted was the air conditioning. Because I had been advised, and we had been advised so strongly by other detention staffs, "Whatever you do, be sure that you incorporate air conditioning, not only because of warm weather or hot weather (which we have a very short period of in this community, as you know), but you will need the air conditioning because you will be holding emotionally disturbed children, and especially in hot weather, you will find that it is a problem." And that, of course, is a chapter in itself. But because of their so strongly insisting that we

have air conditioning, I was holding out (of course, the word—or the adjective—used for me was “in my stubbornness,” it you want to put it in quotes), and I guess I was. But I was as determined to keep the air conditioning as they were determined to delete.

This was finally resolved by the women’s auxiliary to the Washoe County Bar Association having a meeting and deciding that they would (of course, they’d been assisting us for a period of time, anyway) guarantee the air conditioning. In other words, they would take the financial responsibility to see that air conditioning was included. It did eventually cost that group more than \$10,000 for the air conditioning. So we were over that hurdle.

Then, of course, I have always felt that I was more to blame than anybody else for suggesting (and the architects followed my suggestion) an indoor recreation area labeled “gymnasium?” And I always felt, when that area became deleted, that had I used (well, it was a matter of semantics) “multipurpose room,” or even used “indoor recreation area” — anything but that word “gymnasium,” because, as you know, that, in a lot of peoples’ mind, is one of the frills of school construction. And, of course, it immediately became a frill for the [laughing] construction of the detention home. We got an editorial in the Reno Evening Gazette, too, of people building their fancy monuments to themselves and all of these things that weren’t needed. So I say I’ll take the responsibility for the fact that we had the gymnasium deleted. And, of course, anyone living here, and anyone that has been in Wittenberg Hall then or now became immediately aware that there were no frills included in the construction anywhere in any way.

If there was something that might have been considered a little bit fancy, it was the

lovely block walls as part of the exterior, and the one that extended along the girls’ wing, the one in the little patio area between the detention home and the probation offices. But there again, that was paid for by the Lawyers’ Wives, as their group is known.

The walk-in cooler was deleted. In fact, I optimistically had had two such areas in part of the plans. The commercial-sized laundry was deleted, but there was a small area in conjunction with the kitchen area that we eventually used for laundry. Put we had to use household-type washers and dryers. And where you do the laundry for so many children over the years, why, it became quite an expense, just keeping up with equipment that would operate.

Now, as part of the new remodeling and new construction, there is an area large enough for the commercial equipment. In fact, the commercial-sized dryer and washing machines are already installed. Of course, everybody’s very happy about that.

But to get back to deletions, I had never, myself, used a figure of less than twelve rooms for offices for the probation staff. And in just discussion, I had felt that, for long-range planning, we really ought to have fifteen, and even better, twenty, that the rooms could be used. It wouldn’t be wasted space over the years. But as population growth was predicted for this area, I thought it wouldn’t be too long that we would be using at least the twelve spaces, and with other agencies sending their workers to the department, too (county welfare, state welfare), well, now there should be rooms for these people, too, to talk with the children. And yet not only did we not have twenty or fifteen or twelve, it ended up with six offices. So, of course, it wasn’t too long until we were out of office space, and then the board of commissioners did make available the second floor of the old Sparks



Library building to us on B Street. Of course, there are a half a dozen officers still operating out of that building, which was supposed to be a temporary situation.

Also, with the present construction, too, additional office space, or an office building, again was deleted. So when this phase is finished, the probation department will still be faced with the very same problem of being divided, part of the staff working out of Sparks and the rest of the staff working out of Reno. I objected very strongly to this situation when I was there as the chief probation officer because I found it difficult for me to be in two places at one time. You cannot supervise a Sparks office from a Reno office. At that time I didn't have an assistant chief probation officer, and no one was really delegated, or was I ever given the authority to really delegate the responsibility. I just asked one of the probation officers (and they were sort of taking turns) to check the building as to security. But after all, there's expensive equipment there, electric typewriters, and what not. But I say that situation still isn't resolved. There was nothing done about more office space for probation officers. Well, as you grow and as you handle more children, you have to have more probation officers. It goes hand in hand.

But, at any rate, what they are doing now I am not criticizing in any way whatsoever, except I guess I'm criticizing what they aren't doing again. But what they are doing, for what I've seen, I'm very pleased, as I'm sure all the staff are. I'm sure the probation committee must be, and I'm sure the judges must be. It's very good planning, and it's all very necessary, not that it confirms some of my predictions and that sort of thing. That has nothing to do with it. I'm no longer there.

I think I should incorporate right here, too, over the years, the Washoe County

juvenile detention facility, Whittenberg Hall, has received the very best of compliments from people with the expertise to know what they're saying and doing, that Wittenberg Hall is one of the better small detention facilities in the country. People have come from the Eastern states, the Midwest, some of the Western states. I remember a group coming from Salt Lake City when they were going to be involved in some construction program, coming to visit. The children's Bureau, the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, all have been very, very generous in their praises. They liked the small facility that was constructed, even though they knew, too, that storage space and this, that, and the other was very inadequate. But at the same time, it was a good small facility. And then we've been especially complimented on the fact of our program, the atmosphere, that it did function to be of assistance to the children. And I'm very proud about that.

Also, today, I thought I'd like to get down on the tape the fact that the construction under way at Wittenberg Hall, enlarging the facilities, is really nearing completion. Probably another month or two, why, the work will be finished. And what they have added will really improve the operation. The kitchen was too small; they've enlarged the kitchen. They've done a very much better job of storage, freezers, and refrigerators. They have two ranges now, rather than the one secondhand one that we had used over the years. Everything has been improved to a point for a much better operation. They have built a classroom that'll make the program much better from the academic standpoint. I think I've already told you the county school district does supply a full-time teacher. They also have a teacher's aide. And where I do not know the present teacher, I do know the teacher's aide. She is Mrs. John



Damm, Cathy Damm. And she's been there now for a number of years. Cathy's a very, very dedicated, conscientious, good worker, wonderful with the children, very wonderful with the staff.

The classroom has been just the multipurpose area, and there'd be a lot of interruptions, a lot of people walking through, all that sort of thing, that was a very poor excuse for an academic situation. It wasn't a regular classroom. No one would expect it to be. Most of the youngsters are functioning on an individual basis. An awful lot of the work is remedial. But there are things that they can do together, and do do together. And having this very nice, well-lighted, cheerful, big room for a classroom pleases me very much. The old library was incorporated into the girls' wing, and there is now a new library area, which has been considerably enlarged. There still is a chapel in conjunction with the library. The WCTU, the local Reno Union, has also recently given them a very, very nice Magnavox stereo phonograph. They also have a piano now so they can have group singing in that area. They can also have the singing of hymns and what not in conjunction with their church services.

Then there's a large addition for the individual rooms for the holding of both boys and girls. Before, we could hold eleven girls and nineteen boys, and I know it's more than doubled. [The facility now holds seventy-five youngsters, twenty-two girls and fifty-three boys, and in an emergency, there is room for ten more children.] Also, the way they have constructed the sleeping wings for the children, they have ended up with a couple of enclosed courts which will be available in all the good weather for some of the games, and also for just exercising, and if nothing else, to be out in the sun. And I'm very pleased with the additions. I was, of course,

very disappointed at the time the building was originally constructed that these many things that they've added now were deleted. But then, that's the way things go sometimes. But I think the community will be very, very pleased when they see what has been done.

#### WITTENBERG HALL STAFFING

I would like to talk about Wittenberg Hall more, because, as you know, it was an undertaking of so many years. We made every effort that it would be (and I know I've said this before) a decent place for children. It is easy to say that our philosophy is to be "of assistance to children," but it isn't always that easy to put it into effect. And for one example, we screened, we thought, very, very carefully for staff. Especially for the girls that we knew we would hold, we wanted women experienced with working with teenage girls, preferably women who had raised children, a woman of considerable maturity, understanding, and then, of course, looking for people that would have compassion and understanding for these children (not to coddle, not ever to coddle, and not to baby, but also, not punitive), that would be able to accept the child just exactly as the child was, and to be able, then, to assist the child while he was in the hall.

Again I had the complete cooperation and support of the probation committee, that when we did open our detention home we would be very careful about who was hired as group supervisors, and that it would be reason to fire them on the spot if they did name-call, if they did in any way abuse, and, of course, they were not to touch a child or physically discipline, and not to touch the child unless it was in self-defense, and they would want to have a very, very convincing story, even in self-defense. In the first several years of operation of the detention home, as

carefully as we screened, it was necessary to fire a number of group supervisors because they did not adhere to the philosophy and because they did mistreat a child. There were several instances of mistreatment that I didn't learn of at the time they happened. But when I did learn that such things had happened, then, with the support of the [probation] committee, and the judges, too, I terminated the supervisor.

To go back again, when we were staffing Wittenberg Hall, and as carefully as we screened, as carefully as we checked out references—. We hired a man who had exceptional references from the County of Los Angeles, and the sheriff's office in particular. This man was married; he had three daughters. He seemed to have a very good background for working with the youngsters. The youngsters liked him; the staff liked him. And in a very short period of time, things in his own home came to the attention of the police department, and the man eventually went to court in this area and to the Nevada State Prison for incestuous relations with his own daughters. Now, that is an example of what you have to watch for, screen for. The responsibility in that line is tremendous, not only for the chief probation officer and the head of the detention home, the committee, the judges, but for everyone working with children. Fortunately, and to the best of our knowledge, this man did not, at any time, conduct himself improperly with any child—I say, to the best of our knowledge— while he was at Wittenberg Hall. But his conduct alone, had there been publicity with that, can create problems that you might never outlive. And it would be a blight to the operation. Of course, primarily, you're interested in the child's well-being, and you couldn't possibly do anything but lose in every facet of the operation with that kind of individual.

Then, for a long time, there were no particular staff problems except that occasionally we would hire someone again, like this man from southern California, who had very good recommendations. Possibly he might even be a student at the University, graduate or undergraduate, and was planning to go into the field of corrections, and who might have given everyone the impression that here is a person with maturity, with integrity, with understanding, and yet, when pressured or needled by the youngsters, didn't have the maturity that he needed and would strike the child or push the child against the wall or physically handle, when one of the basic rules (and which all employees were told by me, personally, always) [was] that it was reason for immediate termination of employment. Of course, sometimes these things would happen. It could be in the child's room. They would not report it, and we wouldn't necessarily know. But, of course, when I would learn of such an incident, the person was immediately terminated. And I generally didn't go into too long a discussion with them because it was very clearly explained prior to their employment, as to the philosophy, and as to how I, particularly, felt. And I use that "I" in this way: I was the individual held responsible to the court for the conduct of all staff. And then, hand in hand with that, you know my philosophy with children, and no staff member, any more than the chief probation officer, had the right to needle or intimidate or to physically punish, ever. You were working to assist the child and getting the information for the court to make the decisions.

There brings to mind, too—it was difficult with some staff for them to understand that under no circumstances were they to stand in judgment of a child or the child's parents or of the child's home situation. Now, the

mother might be an alcoholic. or the father might be an alcoholic and a compulsive gambler. The father and mother might quarrel continuously. The father and mother might physically or mentally abuse each other and the children. But still, you do not stand in judgment. Again, you are gathering facts and figures for disposition from the court, or gathering some information that might be helpful to the psychologist in the case, if there is one; or a family physician in the case, if there is one; the classroom teacher and the school counselor, if that's part of a situation. And you might be personally very irritated with these people, with their conduct with you. It's very disconcerting to go into a home and have a parent call you (meaning me) a filthy name. But still, at no time in your role as a probation officer, do you stand in judgment.

I would sometimes find it personally a bit difficult to have conversation with these youngsters reference their parents. But if I didn't have something positive or good that I could say, better that I say nothing, because they are still the parents of these children. If nothing else, you can say, "Well, your father was in a very pleasant mood today," or, "Your mother was wearing a very attractive coat today," but always from the positive rather than from the negative.

Well, a group supervisor that would say to a child, for example, "Well, with the slob you are, I can understand now why you're such a slob, after seeing your mother here Sunday during visiting hours," or, "Seeing your father here Sunday when he came half drunk to visit with you," or a group supervisor saying to a child, "well, I guess you know you didn't get to have the visit with your father Sunday because he came to the door drunk," the facts are in evidence, and you're not working in any secret kind of manner, but you are working, always, to be of assistance to the child. And

embarrassing the child or humiliating the child because of the conduct of his parents is certainly against anything you might have ever learned in working with children.

It was just as important in the screening of individuals for employment to be as cautious and careful with the cook in the kitchen as it was in hiring the head group supervisor or hiring a probation officer or hiring a chief probation officer. The cook's duties, primarily, of course, are to prepare meals. But she prepares most of the meals with children helping in the kitchen, not just doing the dirty work. There's something else that you have to watch with staff all the time. The children are not there for the convenience of the staff; the staff is there for the children.

Now, good food is terribly important, as you know. Good food is part of the picture that an institution be homelike; the three meals to meet all diet requirements, that the child have milk and green and yellow vegetables, and that the child would have meat, the proteins, the carbohydrates, the foods in balance. And where I'm not a dietician and never have been, I assure you that I learned much about meal planning the years that Wittenberg Hall was in operation because I would go over the menus. Not that I necessarily would be able to improve upon the menu, but it was checking to see that they were following the dictates of good health. And we were especially blessed all the years that I was there, not that we didn't have poor cooks hired at different times (which were terminated as quickly as we could). But on the whole, we had very excellent cooks.

But along with this ability, they have to be individuals who, again, like the rest of the group supervisors, can have children working in the room with them, who know how to talk to the children. And there is a cook at Wittenberg Hall right now, who was there for

many years while I was there, and her name is Mrs. Ludie Viney. She has raised a family of children and now has grandchildren. And if I had youngsters in Wittenberg Hall, or whenever I had youngsters in detention and was preparing the court report for the judges, I always included conversation with Mrs. Viney because she was one that the children would confide in, one with whom they felt and do feel free to talk with. And quite often, I could get information from Mrs. Viney very helpful to me that even the other group supervisors hadn't observed and didn't have in their written reports for me.

Also, the little things—for example, letting a couple of the youngsters bake cookies. At lunchtime, then, they serve the cookies, and the youngsters informed, “Mary baked,” or, “Bob baked,” or, “John baked,” or that several baked them together, and this is the cookie treat today. It gives the child a little recognition, gives him a little attention. Those things can be terribly important.

So each person has their particular role as to why they're employed in their duties, like a cook. But just as important as their ability to be able to plan and prepare and serve a tasty meal is their ability to work with these children.

how, there have been cooks injured by children at Wittenberg Hall. One particular woman was attacked by a boy trying to get her keys. She was knocked to the floor, she was hit in the back, she was hit about the head, she was able to restrain him from more physical harm before help came, but he didn't get the keys. He planned not only to let himself out, but others of the children were going to go with him. It was carefully planned for a number of days, and they watched for the opportunity.

Actually, the cook, herself, was more to blame than anyone else because they know

the possibility that these things can and will happen, and that they must never turn their back. She admitted being careless at the particular time. She admitted knowing that this child had emotional problems. She also admitted knowing that when the child was assigned kitchen duties, it was because she felt that she could be, also, of assistance in the total program. Now, none of this, of what I'm saying, excuses the child for his conduct. Nothing of what I'm saying also excuses the cook for assisting in the circumstances that would bring about such an incident.

We had one woman employed as a relief cook who worked but one shift; she had a number of years' background employment in institutions, but with adults. And these children frightened her. She was intimidated by them very quickly. And her employment was one shift. Some might only work a week because of similar feelings. But then, this isn't unique with just cooks in a detention home. Some group supervisors were threatened by the children, and (and I'm ashamed to say this) some of the local clergy were intimidated by the children, who, when they came of a Sunday to spend an hour with the children in the library, felt themselves to be physically threatened and were very uncomfortable and didn't want to come, and didn't come back, to Wittenberg Hall. And, of course, this will probably sound facetious—and maybe it is a bit facetious— but I couldn't help but personally wonder about the strength of their faith, that they could be physically threatened by a teenager, because one of the things I am not, and never was, [is] threatened by a child. And that doesn't mean that at the same time I wouldn't be very careful. For example, I never sat at a table at a mealtime, if I were having a meal there, with my back to the children. It is stupid to invite or assist in circumstances that can produce problems.

Along with this, you have to have staff twenty-four hours a day who can be and are alert to the situation, the changing of the tone of children. The youngsters that are there on Monday and Tuesday might be very happy in this situation, but you might have two more youngsters booked in on Wednesday that might change the total tone or atmosphere of the detention home. They might be youngsters who have the ability to take the leadership immediately with these youngsters and start giving out some of their own orders, "You will," for example, at mealtime, "give me your dessert," or, "I will have the first shower," and, "If we play ball today, I will be the pitcher, and you see that I get to be the pitcher," all that sort of thing, which, again, might sound very unimportant. But it is important twenty-four hours a day, even when the children are sleeping, to know who is in detention, and why, and the possibilities, and to be ever alert to the situation.

When we opened Wittenberg Hall in February of 1961 for the children, we had staff members hired who, for one reason or another, found that they didn't like the confinement of detention, people who had not worked in detention before and thought they would like it and then found that they didn't. So there were employees who were hired and left, not because their work wasn't satisfactory, but because they, themselves, found that they didn't want to continue in it as a profession.

Over the years, we had very, very excellent people. We also had very poor people, who we'd have to terminate. For example, the night shifts do not have the challenge; they do not have the child contact. And a lot of the work is just going to the door when the police bring another child for admission, and it's the details of getting the child showered (if they can be) and to bed. Then there are other duties

at night. For example, a lot of the laundry work is done at night. And then some of the people took the job because they would need employment but then find that they didn't like night work, or that it didn't work out with their own family. So where there was quite a bit of changing of staff on the whole, the very good people have stayed long periods of time. And we have had exceptionally fine women and men. I mentioned a Mrs. Andrew Clark. She has left Wittenberg Hall, since I resigned, and I was very sorry to hear that she had, because she was exceptionally fine with the youngsters. Mrs. Clark had a personal tragedy. Her son was killed just prior to the day he was scheduled to be released from Viet Nam; an only child, only son. And I don't know that this was a factor in her changing employment or not. But it could have been.

When we opened the hall, Mr. Philip Hannifin was the first director, and he now heads, as you know, the state probation and parole department (now the state gaming commission). A Mr. Andrew Smith, who started as Mr. Hannifin's assistant at Wittenberg Hall and then for a period of time was the director of the hall, was very excellent in all, facets of the daily program with the children. He was always interested in starting something new in which he thought the children would be interested as part of arts and crafts. He was probably more instrumental than anyone else in seeing that we had a lapidary program in operation. And, of course, that brought in other individuals in the community. The local gem, rock and gem (or whatever it's called) club donated many rocks from their collection for the children to work with. Mr. Smith was also interested in leather working, and we started a leather work program that brought so much pleasure and satisfaction to the youngsters in making gifts for others, or things for themselves.



Mr. Spence Peterson, who at one time was a Reno police officer, worked for a number of years in the detention home, a young man very much interested in athletics. In fact, most of the young men that we hire are interested in athletics. We've had very good outdoor recreation programs of baseball games and football games, and just the regular period of exercises—wholesome, worthwhile, healthy activities. I couldn't express my gratitude to those young men sufficiently to ever say how I really feel about the good things they did with the boys. The women have never become as involved in outdoor recreation programs because we just have a big dirt yard. That's what's there. But at the same time, a lot of the girls like to play baseball or soccer or volleyball, as well as the boys, and we would have mixed games. And, of course, some of the girls can catch and hit and pitch just as [laughing] well, if not better, than a lot of the boys. But a total daily program, of course, would include your athletic activities. The men were always exceptionally fine with this. They would encourage the competition of a couple different teams, and, really, always have something going that the youngsters couldn't wait to get outside and to participate.

A lot of the youngsters were encouraged by these young men to get in and participate where they, probably in a public school, were too reticent because they felt that they didn't have the ability. Because of the numbers in Wittenberg Hall, they would all have an opportunity to participate. Some of them would learn or discover there that they had far more ability than they believed, and then this would carry on in later life for them. A boy may be playing basketball at Wittenberg Hall for the first time and go back to school, and if not a main school team, would certainly participate in intramural activities. A boy who didn't even know before that he liked baseball

would, in the spring, make the school team. 7\ boy who didn't think that he liked doing daily exercises would, when he returned home, go right on each day with the daily exercises, maybe even in a limited manner go on to weight lifting.

There are people at Wittenberg Hall now on the staff who have real good programs with the boys. Mr. Robert Cavakis, while a student at the University, is working there. Mr. Thomas "Tom" Haskell, who is not going to the University, but who has found detention work to be a real challenge, is a real asset to the boys.

#### **WITTENBERG HALL PROGRAMS**

Wittenberg Hall, as it was named on opening, enjoys a very fine reputation in our entire country. It enjoys a very good reputation with Health, Education, and Welfare because they sent people to come to see it. It enjoys a good reputation with the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, which originally had been the National Probation and Parole Association, and which group had been so helpful to us because those people have watched our operation and know what takes place. And the people in Washoe County and in the state of Nevada know that our detention home is a very good place for children because we hold children for all of the state when there is bed space available. We hold children from Lassen County when there is bed space available. We have a contract with the federal government, and we hold the more unsophisticated delinquent where maximum holding conditions are not necessary because our detention home is minimum security. But we do have a contract with the federal government for holding.

Where you can read in the newspapers and hear on the radio or see on TV riots



taking place in detention homes, where we have had many youngsters in Wittenberg Hall who might participate in a riot situation, the reason we have never had one to date at Wittenberg Hall is because [of] the youngsters themselves. Even though some of them will say, on the outside as well as on the inside, that they don't like the place and they want out (they say that primarily because they are under lock and key), they do not say it because of the good food, the good beds, the good showers, the good recreation program, the good arts and crafts program. Most of the youngsters are very comfortable in the holding situation, and there have been innumerable instances in the community where the youngsters have deliberately committed offenses so that they would be arrested so that they would be taken to the detention home. Quite a number of them have arrived by just knocking at the door and asking to come in.

I think that most people who have toured the facility have looked at it as I do when I go into an institution. They looked at the children, looked at their faces, and talked to the children, because that's where you learn what kind of a facility it is. And the children in Wittenberg Hall are happy with the holding situation. They may be very unhappy because they're there, and they may be very unhappy because they were arrested and they don't know what the court decision will be. But they are not unhappy with the detention facilities. Two things are primarily responsible for this: the very good staff people who are understanding, who are accepting, who are there to be of assistance to the child, and then the good program which keeps the youngster busy during the day hours and involved in enough activities that when it's time in the evening for the shower and bedtime, they are ready to go to bed and to have a good sleep.

Now, I do not want to give the impression that in any way is the facility perfect (it is not), that there are [no] changes that should be made (there are), that staff do not make mistakes (they do), that the chief probation officer didn't make many, many mistakes during the years that he was there (he did). But rarely are any of them detrimental to the child, although I would have to say, too, that there are times where I held where the child could have been released; and where the child was released, he should have been held. But on the whole, we have made every effort to make it as detention should be, as homelike as possible. And when they say homelike, they, of course, are meaning a very good home.

There have been thousands of youngsters in that detention home since it opened in '61. Many have repeated offenses and have been held in Wittenberg again and again. The county manager and the commissioners have been very critical of the probation department and of me because of this repeating. They are critical because they do not understand that we do not have a magic wand, and that we can, in one contact, assist a child to the degree that there will not necessarily be another arrest. Because many of these youngsters do have very unhappy home situations, and because the number of foster homes are limited, and because, before having to institutionalize some of these children, many of them are returned again and again to their home and they are not able to adjust in the situations, they do come back to Wittenberg Hall. I've always been very grateful that they have this kind of place to be held. And it was always, during holiday times, very gratifying to know that there were youngsters sitting at the table having a turkey dinner, that if they were home, one or both parents would probably not be there, probably both out on a drunk, that no meal was prepared, and in the hall there was

a happy holiday situation available for them, even if it was in a detention home.

And I say, because detention is expensive—I grant you that. It is. I’ve never said differently in this community. It’s very expensive. You build a facility that is homelike at all, as the law says, and you staff it with well-trained people or people of very good character who will be understanding and accepting and able to be of assistance to children, you have to select people of fine character. Of course, I have been told that I was adamant about the food. Well, I think that that was a poor choice of word. I was insistent that the food served to the children would be food that I would want served to me, if not better, because other people’s children are a much greater responsibility than your own. And I can tell you this, too, frankly: there was a long time that the food served in Wittenberg Hall was probably better than what Mrs. Nelson and I were serving at home because we couldn’t afford to serve meat as often as it was served in Wittenberg Hall. But we had lockers, and we did buy half a beef at a time, or a whole beef, and were able to buy in larger quantities. And my wife and I didn’t have a freezer and didn’t buy a large quantity. And I did insist on a balanced diet. In fact, the menus were planned at least a month in advance, and they did follow diet requirements.

It is, as you know, very difficult to make an institution a home setting. But you can come pretty close to accomplishing that objective if the institution isn’t too large. And, of course, Wittenberg Hall was not; it was a very minimum size facility. Also, you can do it by the attitudes and the conduct and the philosophy of staff. If staff is accepting, if staff is understanding, if staff can remain objective with offenses that the children commit, and keep in mind, always, that it’s not nearly as important as to why they’re there; it’s the

fact that they are there, that they have been arrested, or they are being detained, and what do we plan now to be able to be of assistance to this child.

Because it is short-term holding, you cannot do very much in anything to be considered as long-term programming in a detention home. A lot of the youngsters would be there three or four days. But at the same time, one might be there three or four months. They had cases where individual youngsters were there maybe eight months or nine months, even though it is called temporary holding, because some of these youngsters, we found it very, very difficult to make a placement. Or we would try a foster home placement, the child would run away; we’d try another placement, the child would run away, each time returning to Wittenberg Hall, sometimes returning themselves to Wittenberg Hall. When the court would send the summary of the child’s background and what not, the particular institution to which we were applying would say, “No, we can’t accept. This child apparently has problems, and we don’t have mental health facilities,” or, “We do not have a psychologist on our staff,” or, “We would rather not accept this child if she has this physical problem.” And sometimes the weeks would go on, with the child still in residence at Wittenberg Hall.

But, as to staffing, we were especially interested in people with compassion and people who would be able to work out a program following the dictates, actually, of the statutes, that the detention home be homelike. It specifically spells that out. Well, an institution is an institution, but you can have things that are similar to situations or conditions in a home if you try. And I’m happy to say that some of them did work out very, very satisfactorily. Some of them are still in operation today. For example, I

was at Wittenberg Hall this week one day for about three hours, and as you know, probably, the new building program has started, and I wanted to see what they were doing. And then, also, quite often when I go there now, there'll be a youngster or two that I knew in the past. Then because of some of the staff, I like to go and have lunch with them and visit with them.

So we were talking at the detention home on Tuesday. It started out, this particular part of the conversation. Mrs. [Louise] Leggett, who is the head group supervisor for girls, and has been for many years, was telling me the amount of money that they had earned at Washoe Medicals "Tombola Day." Of course, when I was there, we made money on some of the things that might be sold but were made by the youngsters that went back into more supplies for more arts and crafts work. There is no importance in that they're making things for Tombola other than that—well, of course, it does show the community, too, what these youngsters are able to do and able to do well. But the importance of the entire thing is that you could buy them more supplies to extend the program. And, as you know, many things today are quite expensive, when you buy yarns and materials and felts and paints and all the rest of it. But they did earn a hundred and fifty-six dollars this year on Tombola Day, and most of the money came from selling little blankets that the girls made.

They're probably not called blankets. It's more—it's too bad Louise isn't here. [Laughing] She can use the exact word. It's a kind of a little comforter. But anyway, a design is used, and the one we were looking at there, at the little "Charlie Brown" figures—. Then they paint with a kind of tube painting (and I'm sure that has a name, too, but I can't think of it right now). But they put these little comforters together, and they're

for children's cribs. They are very attractive and very nicely done. They not only sold a number at Tombola, but took orders and have orders for fourteen more. So there is an incentive for the girls to make—. And what I like, especially about arts and crafts, it's a busy time, rather than idle time, but busy in a constructive, good way, and then with the personal satisfaction of having accomplished something.

We found, over the years, at Wittenberg Hall, that these youngsters are very much interested in all of the arts and crafts. They like to do things with their hands. They have ability with their hands. And it seems that there is a very real satisfaction for them in this area, because most of them have not succeeded academically and have been, or are, dropouts, or who are fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years of age, and they're seventh, eighth, or ninth graders if they were in school. They're youngsters, many of them, who still, unfortunately, do not have pleasure in reading. Or if they do read, it's the comics or the comic books or "True Story" type magazine for the girls, or the photo magazines, which, I think, are such—well, a complete waste of time in all aspects, as well as content.

So there is a lot of good to come out of an arts and crafts program in a detention home. And then we watched it carefully, too, if a youngster did start something while in residence at Wittenberg Hall and then was unable to finish before being released, that the probation officer and the group supervisor in the hall would see to it that the child did finish it at a later time, either at the hall or at school, or possibly, with some things, even at home. But maybe the youngster was making a present, birthday present, or like during the holidays, quite a few of them make Christmas presents for family members. Or they're making things for themselves, or they might

be even occasionally making something for someone in the hall. And the art work, the work with oils, the work with water colors, the work with crayons, a lot of them worked with collages. And not only are many of the things, in my personal opinion, very excellent, but they did a lot in the total picture of therapy for this child.

### **VOLUNTEER HELPERS OF WITTENBERG HALL**

I would be very remiss if I didn't mention at this time there was a small group of women, under twelve, that were members of the Reno Union of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. And they had as their president Mrs. [Bessie] Menke. I was asked to come speak to their group and tell them about detention. And when I talked to this group, I told them that there were many youngsters who had problems because of the use of alcoholic beverages by their parents, and that some of these children had problems because of their own drinking habits, and that many of these youngsters needed assistance, even like the repair of a pair of shoes, or a pair of new shoes, or a warm coat during the winter months. Or they were getting failing grades in school in physical education because their parents would not or did not give them the money to obtain gym clothes.

Very shortly, these women had another meeting and then asked me to come back. They told me that if a youngster needed a pair of shoes or needed some clothes or needed gym clothes, that all I had to do was to buy them, and they would pay the bill. My first purchase with their money was a pair of shoes for a junior high student. In the following years, those ladies gave the probation department a check each and every month. They gave additional checks to be used

for the purchase of books for the library. They gave an additional check at Christmastime so that we could make the holiday a better holiday for the children, and gave an amount of money that not only were we able to buy good clothes and good shoes, but we bought the very best. We could buy the best in clothes and shoes so that they would wear and the youngster wouldn't have something for a matter of a few weeks or a few months. The WCTU did give thousands of dollars.

Also, as this got into operation, there were businessmen in the area who said, "Well, if that group is giving the probation department money to buy clothes, we will give you an additional discount when you buy anything in our store." And they did. Other groups, then, learning that these ladies were assisting us that way, said, "Well, if a small group like the Reno Union of the WCTU can do that much for the probation department, we'll help." And they did.

And Radius Club, which is another very small organization of women, collected articles for the arts and crafts program in the detention home. They would donate a check as often as they could. Sometimes it was five dollars; sometimes it was ten dollars; sometimes it was twenty dollars. They recently purchased a sewing machine for the detention home. But each month, they did give something that would help the program. And as we go on in this, I will name other groups.

We had many, many runaway children that were apprehended in this county and brought to the detention home that came in barefooted. They wouldn't have underclothing. They didn't have a pair of socks, or they didn't have stockings. They might have had a very tattered pair of jeans. In the wintertime, some of them arrived without shoes. They wouldn't have a sweater, or they wouldn't have a jacket.

We would have to put them on a bus or a train. Because of those funds, the youngster could always board the bus or board the train properly clothed.

Having these funds available made it possible for me to try something with the children. And I did. I felt that they should learn the responsibility of handling money properly. And when they had some shopping, lots of times I did go with them, but lots of times I did not. In the last number of years I rarely accompanied the youngster unless they were too young to take the responsibility. I always gave the youngster more money than he would need for the purchases. And never, on one single occasion, did the child spend as much money as I would have spent in buying the clothes that he or she wanted to buy. They always spent less. They always brought every penny of the change back to me. They were always more than appreciative of the assistance. I never, as I say, had one youngster do other than better than you would have expected from any child. I'm happy to say that not once did they take advantage of me or the department.

There were several occasions where I gave the youngsters as much as one hundred dollars, for example, just prior to school. The parents weren't going to be purchasing anything for them with school starting. I would tell them to buy what they needed to start school. And they did it. And I say, they always spent less and brought back the change.

Quite often, I would give them the change that they did bring back and tell them to use or for hot lunches, to use it when they had to buy the gym clothes, and I gave it to them so that they could have spending money and coins to jingle in their pockets (because every youngster needs coins, even if they are just enough to make a jingle). Also, they should

always have a couple of dimes in their pocket in case they have to make a telephone call to someone.

So I was able to do many, many things far beyond the call of duty within the probation department for these hundreds of youngsters, and primarily because of the one little organization. When Wittenberg Hall opened, we purchased a plaque, a bronze plaque, and it is on the wall of the library, honoring Mrs. Menke and the Reno Union of the WCTU.

The Reno Union of the WCTU gave a check to me for \$5,000 because there weren't going to be sufficient funds from the bond issue when the detention home was opened, and we would need certain things in the operation. For example, there was not any funds available for drapes, and they knew that. But anyway, they gave me a check for \$5,000, and it was that money that did pay for everything that was brand new and that was especially nice when we opened Wittenberg Hall.

We learned that we could buy, because we were an institution, and other state institutions can buy from California the furniture for the detention home, especially in the children's living area. It's a specially built furniture that you can't easily pick up like a chair and hit someone with it and hurt them. It is a very, very heavy, hard wood, and very, very well built furniture. And that furniture purchased for the detention home is still being used today. Also, buying that furniture, we served in another role, because all of the furniture is prisoner-made. Naturally, because of these sales, the California prisons are able to keep on those programs that teach the convicts in the prisons the trades in the building of this furniture. It's attractive furniture, and, of course, naturally, very serviceable to still be used. Most of the other furniture that we purchased at different times has been replaced



at least once or twice because the children are very hard on furniture. Of course, there're so many children held and the furniture's used so much that it doesn't hold up too well. But that original WCTU-purchased furniture is still in the building, still being used, and will be for a long time because it's that good.

When Wittenberg Hall was constructed, many of the things we wanted included had to be deleted. One of the things deleted was a walk-in cooler and freezer. The first couple years of operation, we had to throw out a lot of produce and fruit, and we couldn't keep some foods long enough to use them before they had spoiled. I mentioned to the Lawyer's Wives of our need for this walk-in cooler, and this will further explain their interest and their assistance. They raised the money and paid all of the bills when we added that part of the building. It is a very good walk-in cooler, and it was large enough to include a deep freeze area. That group has saved the county hundreds of dollars over the years in our being able to buy in larger quantities and to use the foods before they would spoil.

We have always been fortunate, too, at Wittenberg Hall, that local artists have had sufficient interest in our program and in the children to donate hundreds of hours of their time at, of course, no financial compensation whatsoever. Not only the hours have they given, but a number of them have furnished a lot of the supplies for the art program. Mrs. Betty Bliss was one of the local artists who donated so many hours and was so very helpful. Mrs. Diane Logan is another local artist who donated countless hours to the program. And this last Christmas holiday was the first time that the windows of the entrance part of Wittenberg Hall for the probation department didn't have the very interesting Christmas murals done by the children. when I happened to be talking to Diane one day, I

told her that I was so surprised in driving by to notice that the Christmas program didn't include the murals. she said, "Well, I did call and volunteer to come do them, but my invitation wasn't accepted." That made me feel very badly because the murals had become a part of the Christmas holiday.

Along with the window murals (and we'd put the spotlights on them) throughout the building, the youngsters hung decorations and made the entire place very festive. For all the different holidays, the tables would be decorated with the paper place mats that they would make special for the occasion (Thanksgiving or Easter or Valentine's Day), plus little fancy nut cups that they would make, and decorations for the walls. Oh, I remember one Christmas, too, they made a little group of cardboard figures of young choir singers, a cardboard church, all of which sounds like nothing until you see the finished product and little bits of genius showing out [laughing] here and there, that—it's something very beautiful, and that started out to be just some junk cardboard.

These ladies were the inspiration, generally, for these things. Of course, some of the group supervisors, too, had interest in the different crafts. Mrs. Andrew [Lucille] Clark and her husband, both, very gifted in arts and crafts, and especially gifted in constructing Christmas tree ornaments, were also especially gifted in working with plastics, plastics including the use of sea shells or Nevada rocks for paperweights, or a pen and pencil stand for the desk, and terribly attractive ash trays, and all that sort of thing.

Well, during the course of a year, I suppose the youngsters were involved in dozens and dozens and dozens of different projects, but almost all of them different kinds of hand work. And it's a very vital part of the total program. I'm very disappointed to see



it changing; even if only a little bit is being eliminated, I'm disappointed that anything is being eliminated. I'd much prefer that more things were being added.

I also learned Tuesday that there is not a single volunteer coming to Wittenberg Hall at the present time. There were several who used to donate their services for a sewing program for the girls. They did so many nice things that were not only helpful to the girls while they were in there, but also, if we had a little girl who was going to an institution, for example, the girls' School at Caliente or Good Shepherd or even in a foster home, and there was no possibility that the parents would be bringing more clothes for the youngster or furnishing any money to buy clothes, and if our finances at the moment were such that we weren't going to be able to do much in supplementing (although we always did some things), we could buy the materials, and then the volunteer would work with the staff. The youngster would make possibly even her Sunday best dress to take, like for church services. Or the girl would make an extra pair of pajamas, or make "baby dolls," or add a couple pair of blouses, maybe a skirt or two. In fact, I remember one little girl going to Good Shepherd who had nothing, and, in that case, her mother couldn't buy her any clothes at the time she was to leave, and all the girls, realizing the situation, offered to assist, and some of them with quite a bit of ability. The little girl left with a very nice wardrobe. She had two or three dresses, and she had three or four blouses, she had a couple of pedal pushers, she had a housecoat, and all those things that would give the girl a little pride in her personal appearance.

Of course, I always tried, while I was there, too, that when the girl was going that she would be able to take a plastic bag of curlers, and she would take the particular makeup

that she used, and she would have a mirror and a comb and a brush, and possibly even a stuffed toy or two to put on her bed when she got to the school. It's very important for these youngsters to be able to save face, so to speak, with their peers, not to be outstanding because they have so little, the same as to be outstanding because they have so much. But it was all part of (as I used the expression so often) the "total program" and taking everything into consideration.

For example, this may sound like a little thing, but I wouldn't want the youngster to leave for one of the institutions and not have toothpaste and a bar of soap and a new toothbrush, a new comb, the little things that they can set on the dresser or the bedside table. So we did those things, and thanks, again, in that area, to the Reno Union of the WCTU. They almost always had funds available for us that we could purchase these things. I don't even know at the moment if they're still contributing monthly or in individual cases, but they did all of the years that I was with the probation department.

#### **SUMMARY AND A LOOK AT THE FUTURE OF THE WASHOE COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT**

I realized over the twenty years as a chief probation officer that at different times I would have to face up to "easy solutions" to the problems within the department. At one time it would be that people were pushing for more recreation. Another time they were pushing for more foster homes, and another time pushing that we needed more institutions. They would see these things as easy answers, and would, in conversations, use phrases like, "Well, if we had more of—." Well, where everything is a factor, and everything can be of assistance, quite often, they are not

necessarily solutions, and never are there easy solutions. In the full twenty years, I never found anything that was actually a solution.

There were things that are helpful. Now, very excellent foster homes are one of the best tools for probation officers as they are for social workers and welfare. There's no question about it. Very small facilities of a similar pattern to Wittenberg Hall, but rather than being "locked door," to be "open door" and the youngsters free in the community for public school attendance or other school attendance, and free to be in and out, of course, living under rules and regulations and supervision. Put I do know this, that we could have profited many, many times in our planning for children if we would have had a small group-living type facility. Now, in lots of places, they call some of these things "halfway houses." Well, there again, a halfway house can be an excellent assist for youngsters, for staff, for the community. But a poor halfway house—better not to have one at all. And I was hopeful that when we got to talking about enlarging Wittenberg Hall (which started, actually, almost at the time of the original completion because we didn't have this and we didn't have that, and we needed this storage area, and so forth), we often talked about how wonderful it would be for so many of these youngsters, if rather than their having to return to the situation that brought them to our attention to start with, if we had another facility with good staffing. But the youngsters would be free to attend public schools. And I'm repeating myself now, but so many of them really just needed this feeling of security that they had at Wittenberg Hall and didn't need, really, much more than security right here in the community. It was wrong for us to plan out of the community, and they were not candidates for institutions, even the good ones.

I'm hopeful that one of these days, Washoe County will see fit to build just a facility. Of course, I'm referring to one, now, that would not have any stigma attached as a detention home. It would be a residential living area. Oh, you could use a name something like the children's home did in Carson, with their "Sunny Acres." There certainly is no stigma to the name "Sunny Acres" in contrast to "orphanage." And I know that some of the present staff are discussing this sort of thing. And I know that if, during the time that I am county commissioner, such a suggestion comes up, or I can even steer things to such a suggestion, I will do it. I think it would be invaluable in the area for the particular kind of service it would perform.

I think that not at any time have we, as a probation department, or has Washoe County (really, without being critical of any other agency with that responsibility) ever really gotten into a real endeavor for foster homes. There's been sort of a surface deal over the years, and some kindly couple have offered their home, and this sort of thing. Of course, there's been some recruiting of foster homes. But I say there's never really been an in depth study made or any real, basic program to recruit good people and then train them. Then, of course, the people do need assistance. There again, I'd even have to say in the probation department, we never ever followed through as we should have with good training. And I suppose I'd rationalize it with we never had the time. Well, we should've made time.

I've felt for many years that there should have been a probation officer with no other responsibility than to recruit good foster homes and then train and work with these parents. Because many times, foster parents fail, really, because of the institution's use of the facility, not because of their own abilities.

They needed more support that they didn't get, for example, just helping them to understand that the parents of the placed children will impose themselves upon foster parents. When the child is there, they'll possibly very suddenly have a lot of guilt feelings. The child is here, and they feel, "Well, she should be at home, and I know it, hut uh—" And then they "bug" the foster parents by too many calls and too many visits, and—well, just plain unadulterated interference. I hope that this community will do more along that line.

Then, where we're moving in the general direction of the adult age coming down the ladder, for example, the eighteen-year-old vote, I hear things, too, about, well, over sixteen, or under eighteen, or over fourteen, that sort of thing. I think there's a tendency in the country again, because these youngsters are so knowledgeable today, to want them to conduct themselves more as adults at an early age. And I don't think for a minute that they're not completely capable of it, hut I think it's a wrong-thinking kind of philosophy in some respects, that, "Well, we'll let them be children in this category, and this category, and this category, but no, now in this category, we'll expect them to be adults." I think there can be very fine lines drawn there, and I think you would have to be very, very careful in drawing conclusions as to, "not let them do this, but we'll let them do that," and "who's making that decision, and who's going to enforce it."

I have had lots of thoughts along that line because for more than the twenty years as a probation officer, I felt that if a youngster were required to register for the draft at eighteen that he should have the privilege of a vote. I've never changed on that, and I still do believe it. I don't mean that all eighteen-year-olds would necessarily vote with the greatest intelligence, but I think we discussed this before once, too. I think most eighteen-year-olds would vote

with equal or more intelligence than a like number of adults. I think that the youngsters have much knowledge and are very capable, and I have all the faith in the world in the young people. But I don't have as much faith in a lot of these adults who are making decisions for them as to just what should be done.

Now, at this session of the legislature, they took traffic from the district court for juveniles, put it back in municipal court. Regardless of what expression might've been put forth, I know what it is: it's for revenue, it's for fines. And the municipal courts will have the fines, and the probation department will have the rest of the youngsters referred to them, and, of course, all of the court matters will go to the probation department. So what the legislature has done, they have delegated a certain number of youngsters will go to municipal court, and for those offenses they will be fined, and they will help to fill the coffers to raise salaries of municipal court judges, and so forth and so on. I think that there is no thought there as to just what was being accomplished by having traffic in the juvenile court.

Now, of course, I have to speak for this area. But I do know that we handled, and since I left, the department has handled traffic in a very realistic, a very sound, a very excellent manner because all the emphasis has been on safety. All of the emphasis has been on and for the best interest of the child and the community. And where we had repeaters, on the whole, most of these youngsters profited from the counseling where they wouldn't—I don't say that some people don't profit from a fine, hut I think you teach safety, you don't fine people into safety.

We had, without bragging, the very best kind of juvenile traffic department in this county. I point with pride to people

like Mr. Tom McClosky, and before him, Mr. Robert Short. I'm very proud of what others in the area have done about the traffic school for juveniles. Of course, many of the youngsters were referred to the traffic school by our department, and I think that has been something very good. I surely hope they continue to use it.

But where there is the possibility of a five-, ten-, fifteen-, twenty-, twenty-five-dollar fine, I can't see them sending them to traffic school in lieu of a fine. They're more apt to fine, and maybe then fine and traffic school.

Something else with the traffic school, too, the youngster did have to pay for that, or his parents pay for him, but it wasn't just paying and the idea of punishment. It was, again, paying for an educational experience. And I was very, disappointed to see the legislature make that change this year. Of course, I know it was pushed by Clark County, and primarily the Clark County probation department. But because their traffic situation was unsatisfactory didn't mean that in other areas in the state that it wasn't satisfactory. It was more than that here. Also, I can say for some of the smaller counties, too, for example, Dir. [W. D.] Jeffers in Mineral County had a very good traffic program over the years. Mr. [Robert] Davidson in Winnemucca had a good program for traffic. Pershing County also; Churchill County also. To the best of my knowledge, the traffic program in Elko County improved the last number of years. So, anyway, I was very disappointed to see that happen.\*

There was talk during the last session of the legislature of not handling runaways, not handling incorrigibles in probation departments. Well, I say I'm concerned because I don't think we have experts to determine labelings or categories, and who will and who won't. I think the philosophy

of the juvenile court is that, because of chronological age, that if they are under the age of, then that matter is proper for the juvenile courts.

I wish they would've done more in this session for a family court. We have many things in this state that could be better handled in family courts. As you know, nothing materialized along that line.

I couldn't help but feel two years ago, when the legislature was in session, that almost everything was not what we are going to do for, but what we're going to do to a child. It was not nearly like that this session. But at the same time, I don't think that there was the concern for children that a legislative body should have. I think that there is so much available today, and so many areas that are making strides in very positive directions. I'd liked to've seen Nevada move in a more positive direction.

Now, I have to realize, of course, too, that our governor is just as new as a governor as I am new as a commissioner. But he does have the background in education and a background in probation, as I've said on other tapes. He was a chief probation officer in Clark County at one time. I know the governor's concern for children. Possibly by the time of the next legislature, Mike will have programs that will be more in the sincere concern for children than these bills that get introduced by this, that, or the other that are not necessarily in the child's best interests.

Another little area where people come up with easy solutions is the matter of the home, and that because parents were lax in discipline, that the home life was this, or the home life was that. Or it's because of mothers

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\*The governor failed to approve the bill, so it did not become law.

working, or it's because the father comes home from work and has his evening meal and gets behind the paper and goes to sleep, or the father gets home from work and he and the mother have the social drink before dinner and then wine during the dinner and then ten drinks after dinner and drink them into a stupor—. And in all of those things, there are certain truths, but quite often, when you start making generalizations and referring them to the homes in the area are because of, or not because of, quite often, you find a lot of error slipping in, because I did learn, too, that you cannot make generalizations.

I have worked with many family situations where both parents had worked for practically the entire life of the child except maybe just a week or two or three after the birth of the child. But the mother worked because of her interest in that particular field of endeavor because she was happy to— well, say, be a schoolteacher. The financial part of the home may or may not be a problem. I know a lot of home situations where money was not the reason the mother in the home was working. She worked because she was very, very capable, she was an excellent manager, she took care of all facets of the problem very beautifully. And the idea that, "it's a working mother" could no more apply in that case than nothing, because I think you would have had a very unhappy home situation if the mother in that household hadn't had the opportunity to accept the challenge in the business world or the educational field or whatever she might've been doing. And so, even if I've said it before, I think it's important enough to say it again in this history of mine. We should all be extra specially careful in generalizations and drawing conclusions, and that if women didn't work, and if women stayed in the home, then we wouldn't have juvenile delinquency in the area. That is not a true statement, and

in some situations, maybe the home would be better if the mother did work.

I can see it happening—I can't say just as often, because I don't know that—both ways. I know that because of our economy and because of the inflation, and because of many things, money is a factor in a lot of these homes, and women do work, and both of the parents are agreeable to the employment for both of them because they want certain standards for their family. They are thinking long-range and they do see college in their children's future, and they want to be able to—well, have the feeling of security that their boy or girl or both or five children will go on to college if they wish, and they're going to be able to assist.

In lots of homes, I found that the mother was working because she had to support or shared in the responsibility of her parents, that maybe she contributed fifty dollars a month and her sister fifty and her brother fifty to maintain a parent in a nursing home or provide nursing care within the home, or many things. There are so many, many factors involved that you can't draw conclusions.

I would be the first one to say that the parents who go off to work without giving any thought to the time that school lets out and until they return to the home for the supervision of the child are certainly guilty of neglect. And they're guilty of not assuming the responsible role that they should. I've known of home situations where parents did not give the children the keys to the home and locked the house when they left, and the children were locked out. Neighbors had to supervise in the afternoon. You know and I know from the neighborhoods where we've lived that certain things exist. But just so we don't get careless and make generalizations or draw conclusions—and this has nothing to do, as far as I'm concerned, with Women's



Lib movement at the moment; I'm very much interested in, and I'm very concerned, and I suppose I'm far more in agreement than in opposition to. But I think that the individuals must decide themselves as to the tempo of their home life and to the content of their home life.

Oh, I can remember many, many times in PTA talks and things in this area where people would make remarks about if the parents would send their children to Sunday school. That may or may not be something that's helpful to the child. If the parents have certain beliefs and wish the youngsters trained or exposed to these certain beliefs, well, then, great. But just because parents don't go to church and the youngsters don't go to Sunday school doesn't mean anything at all, that this might not be a very, very religious family, and not (laughing) ungodly in the least. To dress the children all up fancy and get all dolled up themselves and take a pew for a Sunday for a social activity for an hour or two, to me, is—how shall we say, more apt to put stress on the phony bit [laughing], or the hypocrisy, or anything else you want to say, rather than good, sound, basic principles to live by.

There are so many parents that live with guilt feelings because of the pressures, the things they hear on radio and on TV and the things they read in the newspapers and magazines, the things they hear at PTA meetings, and so on. It's a very unfortunate situation. Raising children is a great responsibility, and you're faced with many, many problems, day in and out. You don't need to compound your problem by a lot of guilt feelings. I think that we should be more concerned to support rather than tear down people and their children.

Along this line over the years, I noticed how quick people are to label children as they label adults, refer to a man in a neighborhood

as an "old lush," when he isn't necessarily an old lush at all. He might be a young lush, or he might drink a little more than others, but he might have far more good qualities than—especially this label he's packing around.

Children get labels. I've seen that year after year, a youngster carrying a particular label when it wasn't deserved. I think we talked about that, too, when the youngster has a label in school, of being fast, or promiscuous, or something like that, and yet it wasn't warranted and it wasn't deserved and it wasn't true.

I don't mean that probation officers are immune from using labels. It's easy to draw conclusions from a short period of observation and say, "This child is dull," "This child's very slow," "This child's extremely emotionally disturbed," "This youngster is psychotic," "This youngster is an habitual truant," "This youngster is never going to be able to do this, that, or the other." I don't know if this is right or wrong, but in my own mind I've thought of it so much as just careless talk. People really don't mean it when they say it; they may not even believe it when they say it, but it's something to say, and it just sort of flows out. And it's an area where all of us could improve ourselves every day in our conversations with our friends and with other people and in our daily living, to think a little more and talk a little less, and then when we do, to be careful what we say. It would make for a lot more happiness. My concern has always been with children, so I've observed it more with children. But it's wrong to let generalizations lead even to the theme for a paper or the topic for a PTA talk, or the theme for an article in the paper or an editorial, and what not, when if you dissect and look at it very, very closely, you'll find that no, that isn't a factual statement. It's a generalization not based on fact.



Of course, in the Washoe County Juvenile Probation Department, me went from the beginning to what was the end of my twenty-year period, and there was the natural growth during that time, and expansion. Looking back at the twenty years, now that I've been out almost two, I can't see too many areas that I would have changed too much, except that possibly, I should have worked much more diligently with the committee and with the judges for more probation officers than we did have almost all of those years. I take most of the responsibility of that facet. I think that I realize, on looking back, that we probably, just like with foster homes, would have done better in several fields had I really insisted on more money for more staff and maybe even pioneered a little more in this area for some things. I've thought, too, that we might have had a group living facility if I would have really worked harder for it than I did. At the time, I guess I thought I was saying and doing what I believed was necessary, but looking back at it, I think maybe I didn't. Maybe there would be one in operation right now.

There are some things over the years that I'm not especially proud of in the juvenile field, but there are some things of which I have a lot of personal satisfaction, and that primarily revolves around the philosophy that we did establish. And I am grateful to those people on the committee and the judges and other people in the community for their acceptance of the particular philosophy, because I think I can say in absolute honesty that that twenty years was based on a working principle of being of assistance to the child. Whether it worked out that way or not in particular cases, it was the basic principle for operation. And I think, on the whole, (I would have to use I there) I did adhere as closely to that principle as a person would be capable of doing. I think that it did have its

influence in this community, and even some in the state, and some in the Western region because of conference meetings as, naturally, I grew because of these contacts, too, and could do things better here. I think other areas did accept some of our philosophy. And I think that our insistence on having a detention home that was to be as homelike as possible had its effect in other areas. And people are still coming here on occasion for a look-see at our little detention facility on Mill Street.

I don't like the word that I am "proud" of what I did do in the probation field, but I am satisfied that I made an honest effort—and I use that word again—to be of assistance to children during that period. And staying in this community and having contact with these youngsters now that they are adults, of course, I derive great pleasure from seeing and talking with and knowing—well, I mean if laughing], it's right before my eyes. Here is a boy or girl that it could have been a very different picture who's functioning beautifully and who has a very happy life. Of course, I think there'd be something wrong with me if I didn't take real satisfaction in that.

Then, as I told you before, too, when I filed for county commissioner, young people that I hadn't really been in contact with called or came by or wrote a letter and offered their support. And all of that had a very happy result in the fact that I was elected to the position.



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## STATE INSTITUTIONS AND AGENCIES DEALING WITH CHILDREN

### THE CHILDREN'S HOME AT CARSON CITY

In 1949, Nevada had [such] institutions for children [as] the children's home in Carson City, which, over the years, was known as the Orphan's Home. At about that time, too (I think it was a little later), it was given the name "Sunny Acres" to get away from a state orphanage connotation because, as I learned very quickly in going over there, it wasn't an orphan's home at all; it was primarily a home for children who were either abandoned or rejected, or they were children whose parents temporarily were not able to care for, and would eventually be reunited with family. And then, there were many children there who were brought to the children's home as infants, and because of the law in part, and because of policy, also, they just—it was their home until they were old enough to quit school or to take employment. But they stayed at the children's home in Carson City. (And I'll get into that part. Those things are not so today.) And where there are a number of orphans, it is really not an orphanage. It is

a facility for children that need that kind of placement. And they no longer take infants. They do not take, to the best of my knowledge, preschool children. There are sufficient foster homes in the state now, and these infants and preschool-age children are foster home-placed.

But the children's home went from the original, very large, two-story institution-type building to, today, it is what they call a cottage-type. And the children are placed in these individual cottages with "cottage parents." They attend the public schools in Carson City, and they have a more natural, homelike environment. Where they do do things as groups, most of the activity is small group and a home situation with their "home parents."

The children's home is now under the direction of Mr. John Aberasturi. His employment before going to the children's home was with the state welfare department. He is a professional, and he does have the academic background, and then he also does have the heart to be involved with this

kind of employment. John is one of our better state employees. The children's home is a very good operation. Now it was—and I would want to state this very plainly, too—a very good operation even when they had the old buildings and the big institution-type building. And it was a good institution in 1949 and all the years thereafter. It's one of the institutions that the state of Nevada can point to with pride.

Now, it doesn't mean that over the years that those superintendents and their wives haven't had problems. There have been many problems. Finances has been one of them. But they have handled these problems very intelligently over the years, and the place has always been a good place for children. That goes back a long time.

We did place children in the children's home in Carson City. From the beginning years of being the probation officer right up to the last month as probation officer in Washoe County, I was personally in contact with the children's home, and I can say that, through all of the twenty years, the children's home was always an excellent home for children. Now, through some administrations, it might be a bit better than with others, but it was always good or very good, and most of the time, excellent. And the [Roland] Van der Smisens, both Van and his wife (they lived on the grounds at the time), were "Papa" and "Mama" to the children in the children's home. At that time, too, the youngsters weren't eligible for adoption, as the laws were later changed. And any youngster that was at the children's home more than a calendar year without the parents contributing to the support or being in contact with the child automatically became eligible for adoption or placement outside of the home. But that law was not in operation in the beginning years, so the Van der Smisens had in residence small infants through high

school seniors, and a lot of the youngsters lived there many, many years. Of course, in time, the big, old, prison-built dormitory was not used for dormitories, and they built cottages at the children's home and now use the cottage system, have cottage parents, about twelve youngsters to a cottage. They really do a marvelous job for the youngsters in the state of Nevada that are committed to the children's home.

### **THE BOYS' SCHOOL AT ELKO**

Now, the boys' school near Elko was called the Nevada School of Industry for many, many years, and I believe (and correctly) that it started originally way back in the last years of the nineteenth century as an orphanage. Then it became a school for boys, and then it became the Nevada School of Industry. I would have to say, where the children's home in Carson City was a good institution in the late '40's, the Nevada School of Industry was not a good institution. In fact, for many years, it was one of the worst boys' schools in the country. Even though some of the Southern states seemed to have enjoyed that questionable reputation, you didn't have to go to a Southern state to see a poor facility in operation; we had one right here.

One of the superintendents during Prohibition had stills in operation on the state property, and some of the boys were used to deliver bootlegged beverages. And all of the wrong or bad or harmful—and even some of the things I consider criminal—did take place at that institution at different times, from sadistic staff to severe physical punishment of the boys to very bad living conditions, neglected academic programs—I mean, where the children were really neglected in their exposure to so-called "school" situations, where the children were used for the financial

gain of the superintendent and staff and citizens within the community of Elko. Well, almost all of the things that make people cringe when they talk about jail holding for children, those things were a part of, at different times, the state school for boys.

At another time, there was a superintendent who, himself, was very gifted in woodwork and made doors for the superintendent's residence out of inlaid woods. A boy who was at the school who showed an interest in this kind of hobby became a favorite of the superintendent and had special privileges. Of course, the boy didn't end up with coffee tables or chests or any of those things where the inlaid woodwork was used, but the superintendent did. But the boy did get special privileges.

Also, at different times with the operation, if a boy showed an inclination to being good with dairy cows, there was no planning for his release. He stayed on at the school as good labor in helping to operate the dairy. If he was good in irrigating, he stayed on at the school to irrigate the crops. If he was good with his hands at repair work, either mechanical or woodwork or the rest of it, he stayed on as a repairman. If he was an undesirable youngster as far as the superintendent was concerned and ran away from the school, the committing county was not informed, or families informed; he was just forgotten. And some of these boys were lost to their families and to the committing jurisdictions. He just became part of the world at large and was forgotten. If he was one that the superintendent wanted at the school, every effort was made to find him and return him to the school.

Not all of these things took place during the years that I was the chief probation officer, but most did. Some of the conditions existed while I was the chief probation officer, even

though I didn't actually have knowledge of them. Then at one time, our county, with the cooperation and the consent of Judge Grant Bowen, returned the boys that were at the school back to our county, and we did not have any new commitments to that facility because, as the judge and I agreed, we actually were contributing to the delinquency of children when some of these facts were made known to us.

Now, where the things I'm telling you now are factual, many of them I am unable to prove, and, of course, the individuals involved have been long gone. Like the bootleg days, I have no firsthand knowledge of that, that it was one of the stories known to the citizenry in Elko County and to people in all the other counties of the state. The things that I do know and can prove are very well spelled out in the Allan Breed report.\*

For example, when I was told of some of the homosexual activities at the school by boys from this community, of course, the staff denied, said that they were not true, that where there might be occasional sex play (and they were referring then primarily to masturbation—I think you refer to it as “mutual masturbation,” involving two or more youngsters, or even a group activity and what not), any of the other practices were really denied. And yet when I was told by a youngster having been committed there by this county that he was subjected to homosexual practices that included acts of sodomy, that was the time that I told you that boys were brought back here, and we did not commit for [an] approximate two-year period. Those things

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\*“The Nevada School of Industry, An Appraisal,” Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau, Bulletin No. 34 (December, 1958).



did go on in the dormitories; they did go on in the area of barns and sheds; and apparently sometimes even in the fields, in the irrigation ditches. But they were not isolated cases that rarely happened. It was something that was going on continuously, and the staff did have knowledge of the problem.

When I first started taking boys (we did take them in the beginning years by car) to the boys' school, the school was rather small in number, with a small staff, and it was a fairly good operation—not real good, but fairly good. And then, as they started taking more and more boys, and especially more boys-from Clark County, the problem at the boys' school got very, very—oh, I don't know just the word for it. It deteriorated. And then, because of my part in it, because Reno is three hundred miles from Elko, and they would know that I was arriving, I would see a picture that didn't exist at the school when I wasn't there, or some other probation officer or public official from anywhere in the state would happen to be there.

For example, there was a lot of physical abuse of the boys, where they were physically beaten. They were deprived of meals. They were deprived of a decent bed to sleep in. They were mentally and physically mistreated. But as I say, because of the distance and their knowing that I was arriving, I'd go out there, and regardless of the time of the day and which meal that I would first sit down to the table with them, why, it was always very fine food that I could see, and there was a lot of fresh milk to drink, and it seemed to be a very pleasant atmosphere, and the youngsters were able to talk and laugh, and it seemed quite a normal atmosphere. There would be recreation after the evening meal, and the youngsters were playing in the gymnasium, or they were doing this, that, or the other, and it seemed quite a relaxed atmosphere.

Then I would hear stories, generally gossip and rumor, about the school, or about this boy or that boy. And one time when I was out there, I was told a story, that when I confronted the superintendent with it, why, he said, "You say yourself that you can't believe a word that these boys say.

"Well," I said, "there have been youngsters that I have written that [on their records]. But," I said, "if you'll look back on this boy's records, I certainly didn't say you couldn't believe him. I think if you read it again, you'll see that I did say that regardless of what he might involve himself in, he'll always come up with the straight facts, and you get the truth. And you can bank on his word."

Well, this boy told me a story. This youngster, who was placed at the school by Washoe County, had been my ward and under my supervision, lie and I had an opportunity to talk privately, and he told me a story of a young boy, I believe younger than ten (I think he had not had his tenth birthday), from Clark County who was at the school, and of a seventeen-year-old boy from Lyon County, seventeen-year-old Indian boy, who was known to be an aggressive homosexual. And this seventeen-year-old became enamored of the little ten-year-old. And every opportunity he could, he tried to force himself and his attentions upon this little boy, who, in fright and fear, ran from the school. He was able to hide out for a time, and then he was, finally, trapped and brought back to the school. During the time that he had run away, the seventeen-year-old had been put in a punishment room that was called the "dog house" at the school for some infraction of the rules (I don't remember now what it was). But anyway, even though the superintendent knew why this little fellow ran away, and knew that the seventeen-year-old Indian boy would mistreat this little youngster, when he brought

back the runaway boy, he put him in the “dog house” with this seventeen-year-old boy, and left him there for a number of days. And he was physically abused and mistreated by this much larger boy.

Now, as I say, I checked that out personally to know that the boys had not lied to me when they told me the story, and what not. And it was factual, it was true, and the nine-year-old was the victim of the seventeen-year-old.

There were stories that circulated with the boys and that I believed to be factual, where, at times, one boy would be forced to perform deviate sex practices on groups that were even as large as ten, fifteen, twenty—one after the other. Now, you can call it by any name, and then you can write it up in fancy language; it still is degenerate conduct, and I say these things—. And I do understand sex play with children. We had to watch for it at Wittenberg Hall. But it was not normal or natural sex play. What I’m telling here is not sex play; these were gang-bang kind of deals of all-male participants.

There was at one time a staff member, a male group supervisor at the school who was married, whose wife also lived at the school, and they lived on the dormitory floor in separate quarters. And she would, attired in sheer negligees, stand in the doorway of the older boys’ dorm to—and I guess one of the words might be antagonize or to flaunt her sex with the boys. Then, if anything did happen, and any of the boys, in turn, attempted a similar kind of, shall we use the word “flirtation” with this woman, then her husband physically beat the boys, which included stomping them. And he wore boots and, really, physically abused. When they brought it to the attention of the superintendent, they were told that the group supervisor certainly must have been really needled and infuriated to have to take such

measures of discipline, that he always knew him to be very fair and reasonable.

Now, one of those incidents came to my attention from a Washoe County boy, and I did discuss it with the judge, and I did, then, take the plane—not the next day, but the day after—to Elko. But because of the grapevine with these youngsters (and to this day I can’t really figure out or understand how the grapevine works), even though I hadn’t discussed my going to Elko, the word did get there. The staff member and his wife pulled out in their trailer from the boys’ school and were gone by the time I got out there, because I was going to go to the authorities in Elko County, and I personally was going to have this man arrested, and I was going to file charges. Even though it was hearsay to me, several of the boys involved were perfectly willing to testify, and would have. Anyway, they did disappear into the distance, and no action was taken. But also, no effort was made by the school to find this individual.

Now, I could repeat to you and put on tape a lot of stories. But that pretty much gives the idea of that part of how children were abused.

Then there was another facet of the school operation where the boys could do things to earn money, like they could work in town unloading a railroad car for a local business and be paid for this work and then have money in, supposedly, their own account at the school to spend this money for things they wanted to buy. But in conjunction with this, too, if a boy ran away, then he forfeited these earnings. Summertime’s, the boys also could work for the Forest Service in fighting fires. Well, of course, then their wages were very good. Most of their work in town was very—the wages were very paltry. In fact, I might just as well say I consider them slave wages. But, of course, I say the Forest Service paid them the going scale, whatever it was,

and some of these youngsters would acquire hundreds of dollars, even some of them up into the thousands. Most of them, though, did not get these accounts in their entirety when they were released from the school, and some of them never did get anything.

Also, if they were told that there was a certain amount of money and a check would be sent to them in a month, quite often I would write and write and write for this youngster, requesting that the check be sent to me for the youngster or be sent to the youngster. And finally, maybe some amount would come. But if the boy was requesting his sixty dollars, why, he'd get ten, or he'd get fifteen dollars, something like that. And there were many, many things just like that that certainly would work just the opposite. Instead of a rehabilitation program, it would make youngsters more embittered and more anti officials, and rightfully so.

How, that situation, or condition, apparently went on for years. At the present time, and ever since the change after the study, when Mr. Oliver Forsterer went out there as the new superintendent with practically all new staff, I am grateful to be able to tell you that none of those things have gone on. The boy's earnings are his, and whatever he earned, when he leaves the school, he receives that money.

But I cannot say that occasionally a youngster won't report to his probation officer in any one of the seventeen counties that a homosexual act might have taken place, or that sex play had not been indulged in by a boy or two, but they are completely isolated instances. The supervision by the staff of the boys at the school during all of these years since Mr. Forsterer became superintendent has been excellent. You are going to have the potential homosexual activity wherever you have an unnatural segregation of people, and

you have it at the boys' school, you have it at the girls' school, you have it at any institution for adults or for children. But I am able to say that it is, at the most, the very barest minimum that could possibly happen. And generally it's true if an incident starts, there isn't an opportunity for completion of the incident.

And there are a lot of boys at the boys' school, and in recent months I understand it's been way back up into, like the 160's. At the same time, though, I think that I could not in any way other than commend the superintendents, all of whom have been there since Mr. Swain as staff or as superintendent.

The food was another factor. There's a story for that. Well, let me go into that facet of it. Each time that I had visited the boys' school for a number of years (and I would nearly always be there for at least one meal, and quite often two meals), I did not see other than good food on the plates (of course, good on the plates of the staff), and I was served very good food. But the children, also, were eating good food. But there again, it was the operation of the grapevine and then serving according to visitors. And I mean it certainly didn't happen just when the probation officers were there. It happened when any people from throughout the state or other states were at the school didn't observe it.

Then they had a rule that whatever food was put on the child's plate or put on his tray, he had to eat. Or he sat there until he did eat it. Or, if, then, it went on like at noontime into the afternoon and he'd have to go on to something else, that same tray was kept for him, and he got it the next meal. The children helped with the serving. So, for example, you're in the line and you come along with your tray, and I'm dishing up, and I know that you don't like hotcakes. But I'm really fighting with you and angry with you, so I

put a big pile of pancakes on your tray. You take it to the table, and you sit down, and you find it very difficult to eat all of the pancakes, but you're making a valiant effort. But finally Mother Nature and your tummy rebel, and you upchuck part of the food. But some of it goes on the tray. you also eat that before the tray could go back to the kitchen.

The Washoe County boy told me about this one youngster who became physically nauseated from the food and upchucked at the table, and also upchucked on his tray. And it remained on the tray, and he was still told that he would clean the tray.

Well, that was the other story that really infuriated me to a point that I did, then, go into the town of Elko and did reach the judge in Washoe County who was acting as our juvenile court judge at the time, and told him of what I had learned, and could I bring the Washoe County boys back with me. He did take care of the necessary legal work and also arranged for transportation. I brought them back in the car. A police officer off duty came out in a car, and then we transported the boys back home.

Then, something that many people were not aware of at the time, because we gave it no publicity whatsoever, Washoe County did not commit any more boys to the Nevada School of Industry until the necessary changes were made at the school and there was an altogether new administration.

Also, there were foods in storage that became insect-infested, and mice- or rodent-infested, and the kids would have knowledge of these particular foods and boxes of food, and what not, that there was a mouse nest in one. And yet, the foods were still prepared and served. And if it got on your tray, you ate it.

Now, I say, I never did see any of that with my own eyes, but I did hear a sufficient number of stories about it. I talked with a

number of boys from other counties as well as Washoe County. In fact, I made a point of talking to a group of four or five boys at one time in Clark County just to confirm the stories that I have been told from boys in our own county.

They had another practice during the term of this one superintendent and his wife, of nicknaming children, or giving them a name when they came to the school. If a boy was unusually tall, he became "slim." If he was unusually heavy, he became "Fat." And there were boys like "Big Fat" and "Little Fat." If he had an affliction, like one short leg, he became "Limpy" or "Hoppy." If he had protruding teeth, he became "Bugs" for Bugs Bunny. If he had a "lithp," he got a nickname. If he had any kind of anything, he got nicknamed, which as you would know, and you don't have to read very much in a book on psychology to know, that it becomes embarrassing and humiliating. It is a derogatory kind of conduct, it is belittling, and it is anything but part of a program for rehabilitation. Some of them, like "Curly," isn't too bad if you have curly hair, and some of the things. But I mean a lot of them had a sadistic connotation, too.

Then, also, it was the practice that, when the boy came out (and this was before the long hair bit, at all), if the boy did have a nice head of hair and he took pride in keeping it nice and clean, and he did take pride in keeping it combed, the staff would watch for the first opportunity for discipline. And then they would clip his head down to the scalp. Or they would leave a tuft in front of his forehead, or a tuft at the nape of his neck, or a tuft over each ear, or maybe leave four tufts. Sometimes, the head was shaved. But generally, in most instances, it was taken off with clippers. If and when the hair grew out and the boy was still at the school, there would be some violation that could bring about the second clipping.

Now, the little tufts and all that humiliating kind of deal, or games that they were playing might just be for a few days, but it was done. And even if it were for an hour, it was for an hour too long.

Certain boys had the dirty work, certain boys had the jobs that were considered the “good jobs.” And even though their money was taken from them quite often, it was still a break to get into town to work, and you still were away from [the situation], so it became a very real privilege to work in town. And, of course, certain boys never got to work in town, just never. Certain boys never got to fight a fire. Certain boys never could earn a dollar.

There were times when some of the staff, with the knowledge of the superintendent, would, if things had been going pretty smoothly in a dorm, they would deliberately shake up the situation in the dorms by putting a boy or several boys from one into another dorm because they knew that a little feud was going on with some of the boys, or maybe a couple younger boys were a little bit out of hand with some of the staff or giving them a little trouble. Then they’d put a couple of the older boys into that dorm to sleep because they knew that they would “discipline” these younger boys, and disciplining was kick the hell out of them.

The boys did not like working in the laundry. So that was an assignment, again, doled out to those that they wanted to really discipline. And some of the yard work, especially in cold weather (and Elko, of course, gets very cold), some of those chores were not to their special liking. But it was never done in a way—well, this week Bob, and next week John, and next week Charles, and we take turns, and this is something that has to be done. But it was used strictly to punish, and the punishment could go on indefinitely.

A boy could stay with it maybe even the whole time he was out there.

Also, I mentioned it just very briefly that the boys just stayed there indefinitely. Now, that practice was terminated, also, when Mr. Forsterer became the superintendent. The plan for release was part of the total picture upon the boy’s arrival to the school. When the school believes that the boy has benefited from the period of institutionalization, he’s released. He’s under parole to the parole officers who are in conjunction with the school, goes back into his own community or another community, but he’s released. They aren’t long term incarcerations. Apparently, in a lot of those years prior to the ’50’s, and even some after the ’50’s, those boys could be out there a year or two, three, four, five, six, on up.

Now, when I first went to the capitol in Carson to also report the situation at the boys’ school, the governor, after I told him all of the story (of course, the superintendent had been appointed by that governor as the head of the boys’ school), instead of saying, “Well, I understand what you mean about trained staff and the need for trained people”, knowing that I was not trained in institutional work, turned around and offered me the position, which I declined. Several months later, when I went back to the capital city to again tell him that the situation was no better, he again offered me the superintendent’s position, and I again declined.

Then there was an election, and Governor Grant Sawyer was elected. And I went to Carson City and told Governor Sawyer the story of the situation at the boys’ school. And he employed Mr. Allan Breed, who was then the head of the Fricot Boys’ School in California, to do an in depth study of the school and submit a report to him in writing. (Incidentally, ’4r. Allan Breed today is the head of the California Youth Authority. He succeeded Mr. Heman Stark, who was the



head of the California Youth Authority for many, many years, and with whom I worked very closely on a lot of matters.)

Well, Mr. Breed contacted the superintendent of the boys' school and told him that he was planning to arrive at a particular day, and that he was going to make a study for the governor of the condition at the boys' school, was requesting his cooperation, and did arrive. And, of course, there had been a lot of sweeping and scrubbing and washing in that short period. I understand, for one thing, getting rid of the mice in the kitchen and the dining room was pretty well accomplished in a few days.

But anyway, to show you how really serious the conditions were at the school, even though the superintendent knew, and the staff in turn were informed who Mr. Allan Breed was and what he was doing, Mr. Allan Breed states in his study how one evening when the boys were all in the gymnasium there, supposedly for a recreation period, and staff members were present, were in the room, still, two different acts of sodomy were observed. And these staff members were fully aware of who Mr. Allan Breed was and what he was doing. While one incident was taking place, the staff member was sitting in a chair that was fixed for a shoe shine stand, and he was behind his newspaper having his shoes shined. The other staff member was in conversation with a number of boys who were around him. So Mr. Breed's written report included those incidents and many, many more than what I had ever told either governor, and included stories that I had not even heard of. But his study did substantiate all of my claims of the conditions to our court and to both governors.

Well, then, following the recommendations of Mr. Breed, Governor Sawyer did hire, I think, with the exception of maybe one or

two—oh, it could have been several group supervisors in the beginning, but they did hire a new superintendent from out of state, and he brought, I think, two assistants with him, and those men have been at the helm of the boys' school all of the '60's. One of the assistants, Mr. Jay Gardner, is the superintendent of the boys' school today. The first one of the new regime was Mr. Oliver Forsterer, who is now retired and living in California.

But Mr. Forsterer and his assistants, and all new staff, really did establish and maintain, as I said earlier, and do maintain one of the very better boys' schools in the entire country. All of the classroom teachers that are at the school now are certified teachers. I believe there are nine at the present time. They do have a year-round academic classroom situation, but where the children progress individually, it is individualized instruction. They are taught to read if they're nonreaders. They are brought up to grade so that when they leave the school, they can go back into a public school situation and compete with the youngsters. They do have a very good vocational training program. They do have a good recreation program. They do not have fences and guards. The youngsters have many, many freedoms. They do serve excellent food, food similar to what we serve at Wittenberg Hall. And just like at the hall, many of the youngsters in residence at the Nevada Youth Training Center have a better home situation than any they'd had prior to their commitment.

At the time of the election, when Governor Sawyer defeated Governor Russell, the conditions at the boys' school came in for considerable discussion in the press. And Governor Russell claimed that a lot of it was just rumor, and that a lot of the charges were unfounded. And yet, he knew, from conversation with me personally, that the



stories that I told him were true. And he also knew that the stories I told him could be substantiated because I had even offered to have some of these people talk to him personally, and he did not choose to talk to them personally. But he did have the information from me firsthand.

Now, there were many in Elko who denied the allegations. And, of course, the superintendent of the boys' school denied and also stated that they were very exaggerated, and that many of these boys told these stories, knowing them to be untruths, and all that sort of thing would go with politics, and what not. But the superintendent had full knowledge of the facts. The superintendent's wife had full knowledge of the facts.

Quite a large number of the boys that were at the school during that time of that deplorable operation eventually went on to institutions in other states, and a lot of them became prison inmates as adults or as young adults. And I know several who were there during that time that are in the Nevada State Prison now. Of course, fortunately, too, there were some out there during those terrible years that, in spite of everything, were eventually able to fit back into society and got along very well. But quite a large number of them did go along, did go on to further institutions in other states, or the Nevada State Prison.

### **INSTITUTIONS FOR GIRLS**

Over the years, the state of Nevada had to depend upon institutions in neighboring states for the placement of all girls who were court wards. For quite a long time, Washoe County used the home of the Good Shepherd in San Francisco and the home of the Good Shepherd in Denver, Colorado. And then, in the '60's, because of the increase in the number

of girls for placement, the institutions that had been accepting Nevada girls (also because of increased placements in their own state) found it difficult to accept them all, and we were encouraged to make different arrangements. So Nevada legislators did start listening to the requests from the different counties for the need for a school for girls in our own state. But as so often happens, things are slow to move when it involves a lot of money.

We had occasionally placed a girl in the Good Shepherd Home in Helena, Montana. And because Montana also had a state school for girls, they were not placing very many girls in the Good Shepherd Home. They made it known to us in Nevada that they would be glad to accept Nevada girls.

The facility in Helena was an old brick building, but it had been kept in very excellent condition, and was actually a very beautiful building. They had dorms for girls, but closely supervised. Everything was beautifully clean and very attractive and very comfortable. And the girls that we placed at Good Shepherd in Helena liked their placement once they got there and understood, actually, what the sisters were attempting to do. They were very comfortable, and very, very rarely did we ever have a girl run.

They had a continuing academic program that ran through the calendar year except for two weeks in the summer. And where most of our girls were behind a grade, or two, or three academically, they liked the challenge and idea of being able to catch up with their own age group. Many of them were able to complete high school at age sixteen and age seventeen. In public school they would've been very fortunate to have graduated by eighteen or nineteen.

Not only were the sisters skilled in the presentation of the material, but they were skilled in encouraging the girls to study. They

had supervised study periods as well, and a lot of remedial instruction, too. It was similar to private tutoring. The classes were not large, and the girls did very well.

They did have one thing in conjunction with Good Shepherd, of which I personally didn't approve of too much, but for the Sisters, it was a way of making money. They operated a laundry. They charged the counties at that time a very, very small monthly board and room charge. I think it was as low as twenty-seven dollars and fifty cents a month, and then was increased to thirty dollars a month, and thirty-five dollars a month. Most Good Shepherd homes today charge at least \$225 a month per girl, and some of them charge as much as \$450 to \$500 a month, with extra charges in addition. If a girl is to receive psychiatric counseling, why, that's in addition. Dental work is in addition. Medical expenses are in addition. Drugs, glasses, all those things are in addition. The Good Shepherd home in San Francisco today has a minimum fee of about \$475 a month. Good Shepherd in Clark County, unless it's been raised recently, is charging Washoe County \$200 per month per child, with extras.

But anyway, at that time, Helena charged ridiculously low room and board. And then, for some reason, they were getting even a smaller number of girls from the state of Montana, so they were willing, and did, with the superintendent of the boys' school at that time in Nevada (and it might have been like through an interstate compact sort of thing, or it could have been the chief probation officer in Clark County, too; anyway it was our superintendent of the boys' school) make the arrangement that they would take the Nevada girls for a specified monthly amount, and then it did jump at that time from this very low rate to about, I think, \$200 a month. But to make these beds available to Nevada

girls, they entered into an agreement. So from then on, there was no question about having a placement, it, of course, when you sent the girl's court history to them, they felt that the girl was a candidate for Good Shepherd.

They had certain rules and regulations, naturally, and one was that they didn't want placement of a girl unless she could be with them for a period of at least fifteen months, and preferably longer. They felt that it took that length of time for them to accomplish what they wished to accomplish, and I heartily approved. So most of our girls were there probably eighteen months, and some longer, if, by staying several more months, they could complete another year of school or that they would graduate. And if some of our girls reached their eighteenth birthday (and by statute, they're not supposed to continue in residence in a correctional school after their eighteenth birthday), and it was quite possible that they would graduate, then the judges would make special arrangements, and these girls would continue in residence until they received their high school diploma.

Now, the order of the sisters is Catholic, and they are Catholic-trained, but they do not function as a Catholic school. They accept the girls declared delinquent by the courts regardless of race, color, or creed. The girls, with some exceptions, are all court wards and are placed in Good Shepherd homes by the courts. Then, generally, when they are released, if they're under eighteen, why, they are released back to the jurisdiction of the court, in most instances. Now, I think the sisters of the Good Shepherd in Las Vegas at the moment are supervising themselves some of the girls that are paroled in some of the other counties.

But I started to say about—. There was one thing in Helena of which I didn't approve that enabled them to earn money for their

operation. And that was, they did conduct a laundry. They did the laundry, if or example, for the railroad line in that area. And how extensive it was, I don't know, but they ran quite a large-sized commercial laundry. And the girls did work in the laundry. Well, now, this is time for some little gal that might eventually have to take that kind of employment and what not, but very few girls would. So, not that it's wrong to learn how to do things and that the employment or the work hurt them in any way, but a half day in the laundry isn't the best programming in the world.

Also, during this time, we would have some special cases, and there were some girls placed in Good Shepherd in Vancouver. There were a number of girls placed in the Good Shepherd home in Seattle. I remember one girl that had been placed in the Good Shepherd home in Denver who, from there, ran away, and while away from the school, became pregnant. The Good Shepherd homes ordinarily do not keep the pregnant girls; when they discover they're pregnant, why, they expect you to get them out of the home within twenty-four hours. But at that time, the Good Shepherd home in Omaha was accepting pregnant girls, so we had the one girl in Good shepherd in Omaha.

As the population increased in Denver, where we would have quite a few girls there in placement, they would accept very few for us. So the placements dwindled in all of the Good Shepherd homes, and then practically all commitments were to Helena. Then the good Order of the Sisters of Good Shepherd were invited by the state of Nevada and by Clark County to establish a Good Shepherd home in Nevada. And they did accept the invitation from Clark County. When they first went into the county, they were in a private residence made available to them, and then eventually

Good Shepherd built a new facility in Clark County, and it is one of the most attractive, and one of the very best institutions for girls in all of the western states. It has a very modern-type design. It's located out on the desert, but they have sufficient water for lawns and flower beds. They have a swimming pool. But it's actually almost everything that any group would like for a girls' school. The academic rooms are very attractive, and thanks to a club or clubs on the Strip in Clark County, all the rooms are carpeted. They have dormitories for the girls, but they have dividers in such a way that the girls really do have individual privacy, although these little units are all in a dorm area. They have a very good academic program. They have a good arts and crafts and recreation program.

They do receive some criticism by some of the people in the state of Nevada in that they let the girls assist in some of their disciplining. That's frowned upon by some individuals. If a girl runs away or a couple girls run away, they will let girls that had their trust and confidence in the school go looking for them and find them, things like that. But almost any criticism that anyone could make would be more or less of a minor nature. On the whole, to the best of my knowledge, it is one of the better institutions for girls in our whole country.

Good Shepherd is international, and they have been in the United States for many, many years. The girls do not graduate from a Good Shepherd home. They graduate from a high school. In Clark County, for example, the high school is called St. Yves High School. So that when they get the diploma, it's from St. Yves High School, Las Vegas, Clark County, Nevada.

Some girls, at different times, with special interests and desires have attended public schools while residing at Good Shepherd.

They would be in residence at the Good Shepherd home but have special permission to attend public high schools. (And they've done some of that, too, at the girls' school in Caliente.) For example, at the Good Shepherd home in Las Vegas, they are not able to offer the same full curriculum that the high schools in Clark County can. And if a girl had an interest primarily in science, and they could make the arrangements, she would go to the public high school.

But I have the utmost in respect and admiration for the sisters at the Good Shepherd, always have had, and always would have. And I would have to say, too, that all of the Good Shepherd homes where we've placed girls, I think I can say that the one operating in Las Vegas today is the best of the entire group; and not meaning it in any way as a criticism of any of the others, but where they all have excelled in their work, I think the one in Las Vegas is even better.

Then, as I said, we are slow, sometimes, to move in legislation for children. We did eventually build a state institution for girls. It is known as the Nevada Youth Training Center for Girls, and it's just on the outskirts of Caliente. Some of us in the juvenile work at the time objected very strenuously to the school being placed there. It was placed there because, at that time, Caliente and Lincoln County was really in the throes of a depression. Where they had depended a lot on their mining, the mines were practically all closed. There wasn't much activity with the railroads, also, which was another source of income. There were legislators from that county sufficiently strong at the Nevada legislature, and they were able to influence others, including, at that time, Assemblywoman Helen Herr from Clark County. And I don't mention this, either, as a criticism in any way, except that, for other

reasons, we objected to the school being in Caliente. But we have gone over there, and I personally had talked to the two houses sitting as the committee of the whole, expressing the need in the state, thinking that the school would be located near, preferably, a university, or near a university community. I certainly wasn't there for the Reno Chamber of Commerce to get it for Washoe County; that wasn't the point. But I was hopeful that it might be near a university setting.

Then there are other things, too. In this particular area we do have the Reno Business College, and we do have the State Hospital. We have more opportunity for the girls interested in careers in business, if nothing more than checking in stores (there are more here), and we do have department stores. But just from the overall picture, there would be better planning and more opportunity.

Then, also, I questioned very much if, in an isolated area as I think Caliente is, they could keep professional staff. Over the years, there has been a problem in that area. But they have had the cooperation of the people residing in Caliente, and some of their very good staff members, group supervisors, have been recruited from the women in the Caliente area—not necessarily just Caliente, but in the communities in that county.

The school was patterned after the cottage-type buildings, the new buildings, of the boys' school near Elko. And each cottage is built to accommodate twenty girls. There are twenty individual rooms. Now, in very recent years, both the boys' school and the girls' school have built dormitory style cottages, too. But in the beginning, they were all built—and most of the cottages are—with twenty individual rooms for the girls. They're small, but they're adequate.

I don't recall the number of buildings originally constructed in Caliente, but I'm

sure that today they have cottages and are able to care for one hundred girls. At the boys' school, I think they're able to accommodate now very close to two hundred, if not two hundred boys.

Caliente as a community and Lincoln County as a county have cooperated in all ways right along the line with the school. But they did, as most schools will have in the beginning, have growing pains. They had a lot of runaways. They had staff problems. And if they did have a very good staff member, their problems arose in that the wife and children of the staff member wouldn't be happy living in Caliente, and they felt that their own children were handicapped with the small high schools there. The housing in the community wasn't the most desirable. The highways into Caliente at that time left considerable to be desired. (I know that a couple times I went to the school in the early years, I went by train, and you arrive and also depart in the middle of the night.) I don't know if there is today, but at that time there was no bus service, and I don't think there is now. The places to eat in the area were very, very limited in number. And I don't mean to be facetious, and I think that I'm no more than anyone else in accepting what is available, but I remember one restaurant in particular, you competed with a small army of flies at each meal time, and I, personally, have [laughing] very strong feelings about flies. Accommodations in the motels weren't that bad. Now they've improved.

The school at Caliente, today, after going through a lot of growing pains, is actually a good facility. They have a professional superintendent. They do have some good staff. They operate a much better program. They have certified teachers, as they do at the boys' school now. They have a more extensive curriculum. But still, at the best, it is limited. They take the more sophisticated delinquents

from the state, and the Good Shepherd Home, the predelinquent.

Of course, there is an explanation of why, in many of those early years, Nevada didn't have their own facilities. It was because we really didn't have the population to necessitate building and maintaining institutions. For a few youngsters each year, it was much more feasible to use an out-of-state facility, especially in those years when the prices were very reasonable. There are more than a hundred and fifty boys in the boys' school at the present time. There are more than fifty girls in the girls' school. I don't know the population of Good Shepherd at the moment. But it generally follows, too, if you build an institution and you have bed space, why, you generally fill the beds. So I imagine they're all functioning pretty close to capacity.

#### **NEVADA STATE HOSPITAL**

The State Hospital, over the years, would refuse to accept youngsters, even though they were committed to the hospital by the court in this county. They would keep them because it was in the law that they had to accept for a period of observation. They would keep them for that period of observation, and then their conclusions invariably were that the youngster was not considered to be a candidate for the State Hospital, that even though they had a problem, they did not need to be in the State Hospital. In cases where they could establish legal residence in another state, that was their concern, and especially when Dr. [Sidney] Tillim was at the head of the State Hospital. He did work very diligently in another state, and put forth all the effort to establish the residence in another state. And you know that we have many people in this area who do come for divorces or other reasons and then stay, and the youngsters get into difficulties



before they had established, really (except for a divorce), a legal residence here. But that's what they would do, and it wouldn't make any difference what anyone in the schools or my office might have observed, or what information we would furnish. And even if local psychologists had done an evaluation, it wouldn't make any difference what their recommendation might be. The hospital always made their own conclusions that the youngsters were not candidates, and they did not keep [them] in custody.

If they did keep a youngster during a period of observation, they would put them in an open floor with adults. And if the youngster had just one or two emotional problems when he went into the hospital, he'd have several by the time he got out of the hospital. So, of course, we had to be most cautious, too, of any recommendations we made for the hospital. Then they did eventually build a wing at the hospital for teenagers, and the superintendent, McAllister, who has been there for the last number of years, has publicly declared his interest in teenagers. Recently, I think that his willingness to cooperate has really been imposed upon a bit by the number of youngsters involved in drugs, who have been committed to the State Hospital. But he is interested, and he does try, and there is a treatment program. And also, because he believes very strongly in out-patient treatment, a lot of these youngsters are only at the hospital until he believes that they can benefit from out-patient treatment, and they are placed in that service. But it is a good facility now for the people that require that kind of institutionalization. That's both for the child and the adult.

Then in conjunction with our Nevada State Hospital, there was a wing for the severely mentally retarded children, and that wing is still in operation at the State Hospital.

Although a number of us do not approve of that wing or that facility for those children, that's where they are.

#### NEVADA STATE PRISON

Now, by Nevada law, a youngster, or a child, by statute, who has had his sixteenth birthday and who commits a capital offense can be handled, then, by the district attorney's office rather than the probation department of a county, and he can be sentenced to a prison term. Over the twenty years that I was the probation officer in this county, there were several young men who did commit capital offenses and who were sentenced to prison terms. Now, there has never been, and there is not now, a separate facility for the young adult. Except at the prison now, there is a separate facility for different offenders, and if the young adult can be placed in minimum security (because they generally refer to that facility as minimum security, and the old prison as maximum security), this is done. But there is not really a program set up for these young adults, and they are not segregated from adult prisoners. And where the warden has recently stated that homosexual activities at the prison are very much at a minimum, the young adults at the prison, who I have talked to personally, tell me an altogether different story, that they are exposed to homosexual practice.

I do think that Nevada should have a separate facility away from the Nevada State Prison for the young adults. I think that there should be an entirely different program for the young adults, and I think that they would do a far better job with rehabilitation if there was a separate facility. I'm in hopes that if the state takes over the Job Corps camp in Storey County that, with the addition of that good facility (which it is; it's a very fine physical



plant, and very conveniently located to the capital city), they could work out a program there for the older teenager and the young adult, say, to, like aged twenty-five. I think that it would be worth it in lives, say, for society ten times over, if the state would put such a facility into operation. I have recommended at different times to different groups in the state that they give very serious thought to a facility for young adults.

You can understand the judge's being very, very reticent to send young men to prison when they know that there really isn't a guarantee to protect these young adults from—well, the homosexual, if from no other adult. And I don't blame them for being very, very hesitant about placing these young men there because I can remember several cases where there was no question but what the boy needed to be institutionalized for the act he committed. But yet I would cringe at the thought of the boy going to prison. A rather attractive, physically attractive young boy would have a most difficult time protecting himself within the prison walls. In fact, it probably'd be a complete impossibility for him to function in that manner.

I did have many conversations or dealings with the wardens during the twenty years that I worked on this problem. The warden who is there now I have not had conversation with, except at conferences. I think that he believes that he's a very modern penologist with considerable years' experience, and where he didn't say so in so many words, why, I got the impression that probation officers better take care of probation cases and let the prison warden handle his own bailiwick. I did know each of the wardens during the twenty-year period, and most of them were sympathetic to the problem, but they all felt that there wasn't much that they could do about it any differently than what they were doing.

I don't think that any of them, including the present warden, would ever condone any of the practices whatsoever, nor would I ever infer it about any of them. But sometimes, I think because they are political appointments, that they don't try as diligently as they might with the state legislative sessions and really go all out for more funds and more staff and more rehabilitation. But then, of course, they function in quite different philosophy than I functioned in the juvenile probation department. And as you know, too, it's easy enough to criticize another agency or another institution, but I don't say any of this in criticism in that sense; I'm trying to be factual about it. But the philosophies of the probation departments generally are a world apart from [the] philosophy of most law enforcement officials, most district attorneys' offices, most prison wardens. Now, Mr. Paggio and I differ strongly reference any number of cases over the years that he's been district attorney. We get along very well personally, and we are personal friends. But we still have many differences in philosophy and in the treatment of the young offenders.

I think that the Nevada State Prison is probably a better prison than many in the country. I don't think there's any question about that. I think it is. It's a small facility, to start with. But yet it has been for the last twenty years always an overcrowded facility, and there never has really been too much of an education program or rehabilitation program, although there is more of that sort of thing being done now for a lot of the men. If they didn't have prison jobs, it was idle time in the yard. And as you know, for many years they had gambling within the prison; although it's been outlawed now, they certainly did have.

I found it very, very difficult to go to the prison and talk to a boy that had been

under the supervision of our department and then went to prison because, almost without exception, those that I talked to there have always been very, very bitter and very hateful. And where none of them from the Nevada State Prison have ever discussed this homosexual problem in the prison with me personally, they have discussed it with other people that I know who in turn have told me. Of course, sometimes, they're hesitant to tell former probation officers things, too, that they know, for fear that it might not be kept in confidence, even though they did know when they were in the probation that everything was kept in confidence. They became more hesitant over in Carson.

And, of course, one of the boys over there was in Wittenberg Hall for another offense when it was learned that he was the one who had actually pulled the trigger and killed the East Sixth Street grocer, if you remember all the publicity from that case. And then there was the case, too, of the young seventeen-year-old who played Russian roulette. They were Stockton, California youngsters, but playing Russian roulette here in a hotel room, and one shot and killed one of his companions. And there have been others over there.

#### **WELFARE DEPARTMENTS**

Of course, probation departments in the various counties of the state of Nevada are just one agency working with children. The county welfare departments work with children. The state welfare department works with children. And our department worked with Nevada State Welfare (the regional office here in Reno) almost from the first week that I took my position. There are certain cases that have funding for that we did not or do not have. For example,

the Nevada State Welfare Department has a contract with the Indian bureau, and when an Indian youngster was arrested, and if the child needed assistance outside of his own home, we would contact the state welfare department for foster home placement.

Also, in this community over most of the years, there are two agencies that handle the majority of the unwed mothers. And we handled them, too, for a time. But because of finances and staff primarily, we then ceased within the department as a follow-through with unwed mothers, so we would tell the child and tell the parents that there were two agencies that we could refer them to: that's the Catholic Welfare, and state welfare. And then in some cases, you could refer the families to the Salvation Army. Some of the cases, too, both agencies would be involved. It would be an arrangement by mutual consent, or a kind of policy. If the state welfare would request that the probation officer with a particular case continue in the supervision of the child, we would do so. If it was a case where they wanted custody transferred to them, then we would do so. But the two agencies have had many cases together.

Of course, the state welfare and the county welfare have a working arrangement with children, where the state pays a certain percentage, and the county pays a certain percentage, and the case is known to both agencies. Well, some of those cases, the case would be known to three agencies, because we might be in on it, too. And rather than duplicate efforts and make it impossible for individual families to know who they were to talk to about what, most of the time it's more reasonable for one agency to have the actual supervision. If that were the best plan, why, then, that would be done. But there was no hesitancy on our part to give state welfare custody of the child. Children going to the

children's home, we would always work with state welfare.

Now, over the years—oh, I guess I couldn't even estimate the number—there have been a lot of cases and a lot of families that were known to all of the agencies, and we each had our own role to play. I am happy to say this, that in the state welfare department, until she retired, we always had the utmost in cooperation from Miss Virginia Starkweather. We always had splendid assistance from Miss Mary Comish, who was a state welfare worker for many years. And, of course, anyone that knew me and knew Barbara Coughlan knew that we worked hand in hand for the child in the community and in the state. And when Barbara tried for so many years for ADC legislation, I helped in that way to the best of my ability. I also helped on the state level for reciprocal support legislation, also on the state level for the state school for girls.

And in this state, we have so few agencies that—, Of course, we're always personally acquainted, and call each other by our first name. So on the whole, we all had very good working relationships. And the same with county welfare. We were in the same building with the county welfare when we were down at Courthouse annex, and now we're within the same block, with our location on Mill and them on Kirman and Second. They know our staff; we know their staff; we know whom to call. And in the beginning years, the probation department also handled some of the dependent and neglected children (and sometimes it's difficult to draw a fine line and know where the case really belongs), and we've worked together with welfare. In recent years, the probation department's been handling primarily the arrested child, and we refer the dependent, neglected, the abandoned and the battered to those other agencies.

## **FOR JUVENILES**

In Clark County, during the time that our present Chief Justice of the Nevada Supreme Court, David Zenoff, was the juvenile court judge, they started Spring Mountain Youth Camp for boys. And Clark County was committing boys, or placing boys through the probation department in this camp, where they were away from the city area, where there was sufficient staff for twenty-four-hour supervision, and it was giving them a different scene and a chance for a different kind of life experience. And the school, as it grew, had an athletic program, primarily like a good football team, a good basketball team. They eventually did get a gymnasium. They had [a] dormitory type of sleeping accommodations. They did eventually, too, have some small animals, and some pigs, ducks, chickens, turkeys. They did have the winter sports and the summer sports, and they eventually included an academic program with certified teachers and a classroom area, And just about the time everything was very well built and the operation was going beautifully (they had opened their doors to boys from the other counties in the state), they had a flash flood of water, mud and debris, which demolished a good part of the camp. So they went into temporary quarters in a forestry camp on the other side of the mountain (they were about thirty-five miles from Las Vegas in the mountain area), and now have, again, rebuilt, at a different location, the Spring Mountain Youth Camp, and it is in operation at the present time. It is a good facility.

They had growing pains. They had problems that became state-known in kinds of discipline. They, for example, tied boys to a flagpole when they were returned to the school from running away to be in sight of all the others, that, "This is what happens." Also,

## **CAMP AND RANCH TYPE FACILITIES**

a good many of them were made to walk back to the school (of course, under supervision), and I think it was as much punishment for staff [laughing] as it was for the child. I'm sure I would have not participated in such a deal. But I guess the thinking was there that it they were big enough and strong enough and energetic enough to walk out, why, they could walk back.

They had some problems with homosexual activities, and it was necessary at different times to change staff, change superintendents. But it was done properly at all times, and for quite some time, because of good supervision and good staffing,, the school has been free of, as far as I think it's humanly possibly to be free of those serious problems, though I don't mean to infer, either, that it's just boys' schools that have homosexual problems; girls' schools have them, too. And girls do fall in love with each other, and sometimes the girls will continue when released from the school in the homosexual pattern, as some of the boys do. Most of the time, though, the girls, even though they might participate while in an institution, upon returning to the community, will go back to heterosexual activities and do eventually marry. But I say, there are those who continue, and it becomes a way of life for them. We have had boys in the institutions, too, that, as they became older in age and more sophisticated in their activities, in some of our cities have been booked in as male prostitutes, as younger men gettin out of prisons quite often will get booked in the urban area as male prostitutes.

But where they are not many in number, the institutions in the state of Nevada today are good institutions, I think comparable with the better ones in any state in the nation. I'd have to say that size is a factor, and most of these institutions are small, and you can

generally have a closer working relationship in the small school situation.

Also in western Nevada, on several different occasions, interested individuals did make an effort to establish a boys' ranch-type facility. Some of the local clergy became interested, and the minister of one of the churches was the head of one of the schools that was located in Smith Valley on an old ranch with an old ranch house. There was a school in Fallon that was physically located in a couple of different places. There was an effort made at one time with interested people in Winnemucca to have the Boys' Ranch out at Paradise. I won't talk about these at length, and I won't use individual names, but I will say generally they were conscientious, well meaning, sincere people, but they generally got the label of do-gooders, and people shy away from supporting do-gooders. Always, these efforts resulted in failures in western Nevada because these well-meaning people did not have the professional background. They went into it with faith in God and a small pocketful of money, and it costs money to operate, and they would have to scrounge for donations. And you can't be supervising children and at the same time out soliciting funds. There were a lot of groups that did donate, both food and clothes and furniture and bedding, and many, many things, and a lot of people did give money. And at different times, I did sit in with different meetings. Our department did try to assist in all the ways that we could to help these endeavors to be successful because they would be facilities open to us, and we needed them. We did not have, as we don't today, very many foster homes wanting to accept delinquent children.

All of the attempts met with failure because the boys would leave the school, steal a car, and leave the community. The boys were a threat to the young people in

the community. They were believed to be a threat, too. Generally, the school personnel were not too anxious to have these youngsters in the public schools, and with good reason. They were dropouts from the public schools to start with. Many of them had no interest in academic learning, and a lot of them were very handicapped as to reading. And some of them were—I can remember some of the individuals were completely nonreaders. They needed the kind of assistance that these ranch-type schools couldn't offer and didn't offer, and even though they might've gone for a number of years, never would have offered. They were not able to cope with the problems with which they were presented. And I can think of a half a dozen individuals in this community who could not have been more conscientious nor more sincere, very generous with their own money, and yet had to admit eventually and face up to the fact that what they were trying to do just wasn't possible without much better financial assistance and with professional assistance. So I think that would review it just a bit, to include it with these other endeavors.

### **POLITICS AND STATE INSTITUTIONS**

Over the years, too, in all these endeavors to establish institutions and what not, I didn't say very much about politics in the picture. And I could start there with Caliente, where I mentioned to you about the location. That was an out-and-out example of trading votes. Because at the time that Caliente—or Lincoln County—was making a strong bid to get the school there because it was a depressed area, legislators in western Nevada were anxious to have a new building on the Reno campus of the University of Nevada, namely, the library, where we're sitting right now [laughing]. And the fact that it was finally located in Caliente

was in part the result of those trading votes, "I'll vote for your bill to put the school there, and you vote for my bill to put the library here." I'm sure it was quite a bit more complicated than the way I'm stating it, and what not, but that's what it amounts to.

And quite often, at the sessions of the legislature, people, in good faith, representing their constituents, want to keep taxes down, and yet there is the clamor for more services and improved services and better departments, and those things cost money and more money. And quite often, they result in compromises in legislation, "We won't build this cottage for the children's home this session, but we will provide funds to improve the existing facilities, or remodel one, and then in two years, why, we'll see what we can do about building another cottage." And politics can very much get involved in issues in the state, and they then become political issues. If it's politically expedient to get on the bandwagon, so to speak, for a new gymnasium for, say, the Las Vegas campus of the University of Nevada, people back certain movements or favor certain things because they know it's going to get votes for them. And that's probably pretty much human nature. I don't think it's confined to politicians. Hut a lot of the politicians in this state, like other states, too, get to be professionals, and they're pros. They serve session after session, and they learn, too, what is politically expedient. And if it's politically expedient to do this, that, or the other, why, that's where you find the votes being cast.

Also, someone in the legislature learns that there are stories circulating or rumors circulating that the situation at the boys' school is pretty bad, for example. So then he climbs upon the bandwagon, and, "It's real bad, and we're certainly not going to appropriate \$300,000 for them this year if



conditions are that bad,” so forth and so on. Well, sometimes the rumors have truth involved, and sometimes the rumors are just that, just rumors. Of course, the tragedy of all this sort of thing is quite often the children are the ones to lose because the particular services aren’t provided, or the particular building isn’t provided, the program isn’t expanded. Or maybe, too, a staff member may get embroiled in some of this politics, and the first thing you know, why, there’s a movement afoot to oust him, and he gets ousted, and maybe his replacement isn’t half the man or with half the capabilities as the man who’s been released. Or generally, they give them an opportunity to resign, but still, there’s a change in personnel, where maybe, the change of personnel wasn’t even necessary. That’s just another little aside on this overall picture.



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## A TERM AS A WASHOE COUNTY COMMISSIONER

When I retired on July seventh, 1969, I was in need of an extended vacation. I actually needed every day of the first fifteen months just to unwind. And then I found, after you do unwind, then what do you do?

I really wanted to teach government or I wanted to teach family living. And I felt after twenty years in the probation department, I'd probably like teaching family living better than government. But I never got over that first love way back to college time, wanting to teach it, never having done so. So I got to making inquiries for positions, and I was going to be very choosy as to where and what. And then I started talking to school people in different localities and found that a lot of school districts that I assumed, because of their size, had family living classes, didn't have them. Or they had maybe one teacher teaching a class of family living to honor senior students. And I talked to school administrators who were anxious to start classes in family living. In the areas where we wanted to live there were no positions available. I did talk to a man in West Covina, California, and they did have family

living as part of their curriculum, and because of increased enrollments, were wanting to add more classes, and he encouraged me very much, because of the background, and thought that twenty years in a probation department, I certainly was probably better qualified than most to handle such a class.

I say he certainly encouraged me for a position there. Then, of course, in California, with budget problems and Governor Reagan, and all the rest of it, and in budget problems in Los Angeles schools, not only did they not add new teachers in September of '70, they were releasing teachers that had been there just a year, and some of the districts weren't even able to put substitute teachers on the payroll. Actually, I know my age was a factor in some of the communities, too. It couldn't've helped but be, and where they were too kind to name it specifically, why, I know that age was a factor.

In the Carmel area, Monterey County, California, where my wife and I have vacationed a lot, I talked to school people, but I wasn't given too much encouragement about the

possibility of a position. Then they got into the same kind of a financial bind as Los Angeles County, and they didn't hire new teachers.

But also, while I was in the area, just as a social call, I went to see the chief probation officer because I'd been acquainted with him for some time, and told him about my retiring and why I was in the area. He mentioned that if I were interested in further years in the probation field that his department had several positions to be filled, and they hire in August for September employment. He talked to me about special court services, for example, stepparent adoptions, and unwed mothers. We also talked about foster home placements, and he needed someone on his staff with background experience that could really work in an educational program with foster parents.

I did become very interested in a position with Monterey County, but when my wife and I got down to the real nittygritty of making a major move and leaving this area and reestablishing ourselves somewhere else, the job lost its appeal, and we decided that we really didn't want to leave Reno.

Then my wife and I talked about my looking for some kind of employment that wasn't a full forty-hour week, something possibly of a three-day or four-day week to give me a little more time for relaxation and a change of scene after all the hours of work in probation. One evening we were at the home of friends, and they brought up the subject of politics and asked why didn't I file and run for office, and specifically mentioned, "Why don't you run for county commissioner?"

I told them that I had for several months been trying to influence two of my younger friends, young men in their thirties, to run for county commissioner, and hadn't gotten very far with either of them. And so they said to me, "Well, why don't you run?"

So that started Alice and me thinking, "Well, maybe," or, "Why not," and so forth. And then at that time, believing that it really was a part-time job, we thought, "Well, fine. That would certainly be a job that would be challenging," and to put it very bluntly and frankly, we felt that this county was in dire need of some new faces in the political arena.

We talked for and against, and we'd make a decision, absolutely not, and forget it for a little while. Then it'd come up again and we'd talk about it, and I'd made a decision, "Well, yes, I think I will. I think that would be something I'd really like to do." That went on right up 'til the night before filing. And before both of us retired that night, the idea was that I wouldn't, and then I got spinning during the night and changed my mind again. So in the morning I informed my wife that I was going to run [laughing].

So I did file. And, of course, during all these weeks where filing was open, I had thought quite strongly about the at-large seat, in part because of my concern with the environment of the Lake Tahoe area. [But] when it did come time to file—I knew it before filing for a period of time, that two of our good friends had filed for the at-large seat—and by the time I filed, a third man that I was not acquainted with, then, had filed. So, already, three Republicans had filed against the incumbent. And when I went down to the county clerk's office and asked the question, no one had filed for or against the chairman of the board for the City of Reno, Mr. Jack Cunningham, and so I did. I filed against him.

And where my wife and I thought that in politics that you would have to work very hard to win, we weren't aware that, at the county level, in as a small race as I was considering, you have to have a pocketful of money. But you do have to have, and there're many things that you do have to do if you're in the race, to

protect yourself, especially if you're in the race to win. And I was in the race to win.

After I had filed, another person in the county, a woman named Mrs. Eleanor Waugh, filed as a Republican candidate, so I had opposition in the primary. (After filing, I went home and told my wife, "Well, at least we don't have to worry about the real race until November because Mr. Cunningham doesn't have opposition in his party for the primary, and no other Republican has filed, so I don't, either, so it'll just be the general." Then I either heard it on the radio or saw it in the newspaper, where Mrs. Waugh had filed, so I did have opposition.)

When I was discussing the opposition at Republican county headquarters and they mentioned Mrs. Waugh, I did say that I did not know her and that I didn't know anything about her. And that story did circulate a bit in the community, and I had to eat my words at a later date, because when all of the candidates were invited to a meeting in Sparks, and I saw Mrs. Eleanor Waugh stand up, I realized that I did know her, but I knew her by another name. At the time I worked at the Waldorf, Mrs. Waugh and I were acquainted. In fact, she had lunch or came in for a coke quite often at the Waldorf.

So she also, when we got to talking that night, told me, had she known that I was filing against Mr. Cunningham, she wouldn't have filed, that she was really not going to campaign except very, very low-key, and I told her I was going to do the same. So we wished each other well and let it go at that. And I would have to say she certainly did campaign low-key. She sent out a flier to the registered voters of the city of Reno, as I did, also. But she did very little with the news media, in either radio, TV, or the press.

And, of course, where I did work diligently for the primary, I didn't really feel that my

opposition was that difficult. I think you have to believe positively when you're a political candidate. Well, fortunately, it worked out that way, and I did win the primary with a considerable margin. Then Mrs. Waugh told me that she would help me and give me her support in the general election, which she did do.

Campaigning is a lot of fun. And it's- hard work. And there were some afternoons when my wife and I, especially up in the northwest, with some of those uphill, up the street and downhill, down the street sort of deal, Would go to the car for more leaflets or more cards, or we'd meet at the car for a five- or ten-minute break to get of f our feet. Then we'd very quickly convince each other that it'd be a good idea to call it quits for the day and go home [laughing], to not only get off our feet, but to get our shoes off for a while. And anyone that says campaigning is hard work, I agree with them. It is. But it's a fun deal. And where, too, in campaigning, you knock on doors and you can even be insulted, why, you knock on most doors where people are very pleasant and they're very friendly. They may not tell you that they're going to vote for you, and you leave knowing they're not going to vote for you. At the same time, you knock on lots of doors that they do tell you they are going to vote for you, and you know they're going to vote for you, it builds up your ego, and I say it's very pleasant. My wife and I both knocked on doors where we were invited in for coffee, or we were invited in for a cool drink, or we were invited in for a sandwich or cake and coffee. We didn't generally, but I say we received the invitations, and all those things make you feel good.

We did not canvass the whole city door to door; it's gotten too large. We couldn't do it. So we campaigned quite a bit in the northwest, some in the northeast (which is



pretty much a Democratic stronghold and we felt that we could be wasting more time there than somewhere else). We did go back and campaign in the area where we resided, on Yori Avenue, for so long, because, in the primary, we did get a very good vote out of that section of the city. So we went back there, hopefully to get more. Then where the southwest section of Reno is pretty predominantly Republican, and we felt that a lot of the votes in the primary election had come out of that section of the city, we sort of did spot blocks through that section. And then, as I say, we had some friends that knocked on doors for us, too. But it was a fun deal.

Well, by the end of the primary, my wife and I had spent considerably more than we had ever anticipated spending for the primary and the general. And I can explain it to you, as any candidate could. For example, a small ad that I placed with the *Journal* and the *Gazette*, to appear in three Sunday *Journals* and two Evening *Gazettes*, those five ads cost three hundred dollars. It was a little five by seven, or it might've been six by eight, but it was a very small picture and story, as political advertisements go. As you know, if you're really putting your picture in the paper, they're whole-page, or they're half-page, or they're on several pages of an issue. You can remember the campaign for the governor, or even for the district judge, some of the candidates had a picture on every other page, and I say I was just in five issues. That cost three hundred dollars.

We did, prior to November third, for the general, send a flier to all the registered voters in the city of Reno. For that one flier, for the printing, obtaining the listing from Don Questa of the comptroller's office for the gummed labels, the labels were almost four hundred dollars. But anyway, for the printing,

for the labels, and for the mailing, even with a special postal rate, it cost just about \$2,000.

A few thirty-second and sixty-second spots on the radio ran about a hundred and fifty dollars with each station. Of course, I was not on all of them; I was on several for the primary and several for the general. We spent another \$1,000 for radio and TV.

Then with TV, I had no what they call "prime time" at all; I didn't have any. I went early to the several TV stations to discuss a schedule with them. By the time I got there, already, all the prime time was taken, primarily by the statewide candidates. But I did have some spots. I did not appear live on any. It was a flash of my picture and some of the material that I used in the printed ads in the paper, primarily why I was running, and that I was interested in being elected to, hopefully, "better serve the total community."

Then, of course, you put up signs in peoples' yards because everybody else does. Of course, I did that a little differently. I had more in their windows than I did in yards. And then the night before the election, at a suggestion of a friend, we had little signs printed with my name and "for county commissioner" with an arrow pointing to polling place, and we put a lot of those up the last night, some of them too close to the polling place. Shall we put it this way, I guess we got a little bit carried away that night. I can't put the blame on anybody else. I was a little carried away myself, which, the next morning, did result in calls from the county clerk's office, from the county sheriff's office, and from the district attorney's office. So my wife and my son and several friends and I were quite busy, shall I say, for a number of hours, taking down which we had so gleefully put up the night before. But my opponent, Mr. Cunningham, and his close friend, the county clerk, Mr. Harry K. Brown, were very much

annoyed with our activities [laughing]. I don't think, in the technicality of the law, we were within a hundred yards of the actual polling spot, but we were in violation, and there were signs that did get onto city or school property. And I don't deny it. I removed some of them myself.

Anyway, the day of November third was one of the longest days of my life [laughing]. And it becomes very frustrating, it becomes very exciting, it becomes very nerve-racking, you can hardly stand it until they start to count the votes. Then you can hardly stand it because you don't necessarily know what the count means. The first count my wife and I heard was where, we found out afterwards, they were actually giving the absentee ballot vote. I was ahead in that by several hundred votes. But like I say, you don't, at the time, know what it means. Well, then, as the evening went on and I did receive the votes that gave me a wider span as a victor, of course, your happiness increases [laughing] as the vote span increases. We did know before bedtime that I had won.

It was a lot of fun that night, too, because our daughter, living in southern California, would get so concerned for her daddy that she couldn't wait for me to call again; she would have to call. So we helped the telephone companies that night, too [laughing], with the calls back and forth, and then interested friends in the community here and relatives throughout the state, so that it was a very busy telephone and a very fun night.

Of course, from my very first campaign, I did learn many things that would hold me in good stead for any future elections. Number one, with all the money you spend, your best help comes at no cost to you; it's the very, very hard work of your friends and your family. And my wife and I both know that I won because of the hard work of our friends and

family, because they did talk in turn to their friends. Some of them went out door to door for me, and it was friends that put up the signs in their yards for me. I had, I think, a group of about eight the night before the general election that we went out in groups to the various parts of the city to put up those last little signs to the polling places. There were a group of some twenty people that formed themselves into sort of a little committee for me, and many of them were Democrats. Of that twenty, a good number of them couldn't even vote for me in the election because they either lived out of the city, or they hadn't voted for me in the primary because they were Democrats. But they worked with Democrats in their party to vote for me, and I certainly would not have won without the support I had from Democrats. You win because of the help of all your friends, regardless of party or age or anything else. You win, too, because of family members that will work real hard, as my wife, if anything, worked harder than I. And my son couldn't've been more helpful. Our daughter, even though she lived in southern California, wrote many letters to her friends in this area, who in turn worked with their friends again. And I say that's why we won, because of the help of friends. That's how you do win. I don't think it could be any other way, at least in a small community where people know people.

Now, in a larger area, and urban areas, of course, you would have to depend more on TV and the press and radio. But I think where it might have helped me a little bit, that wasn't why I won here. I won because of the friends. Oh, and incidentally; along with that, there were friends in the community who did assist us some financially, or we'd've found it even much more difficult than we did. We found it very difficult financially. But there were friends who did give us some financial assistance.

On January fourth, the newly elected county officials were sworn in, and I can say that it was a very real pleasure to stand up with the group and to know that you're standing there because you are one of the winners. And it's a real thrill to be a winner. It really is. I was prepared to lose, and I think I know myself well enough to know that I believe I would've been a good sport. But I think it takes an awful lot to be a loser. Like I say, I hope I would've had the character to have lost gracefully, as I saw a lot of my friends have to do.

The campaign was conducted low-key. We did not, at any time, say one word against Mr. Cunningham, period. I mean, I can say that in complete honesty. I never did, when I filed, intend to campaign against him. I campaigned for a seat on the board of county commissioners, and it happened to be the seat that he was holding and had held for seven plus years. Of course, I knew him all the years he was county treasurer. I'm repeating myself, but I say it's very, very nice to be a winner.

But then, I learned after being sworn in that it wasn't just a little part-time job. I very quickly had a full January calendar. And that went into a full February calendar. And as you know, as well as anyone, I've continued on into March with a very full calendar.

Then to get back to after being sworn in and the busy calendar, there are three days of the month specifically set for regular county commissioner meetings. It's been changed now at this session of the legislature, where the county boards may set their own meeting dates. Before, by statute, the fifth of the month was the meeting date, and then they were recessed to the fifteenth and to the twenty-fifth in this county. There are counties in the state still that meet once a month, and, of course, Clark County may even meet more often than we do. But we have three regularly scheduled meetings. Now, with the dates, we'll

do, now that we can, set our own because the governor has signed the bill, too, so it's change of law. But we not only have the three regular, but we have other meetings in between and special meetings. Then county commissioners sit on boards for county business, too, like I was named by the chairman to sit on the hospital board; I sit on the board for parks and recreation. In fact, I was named to eight different boards. And a lot of those are night meetings, so you do get busy schedules.

Right after being sworn in, the equalization board for the county met for the taxpayers to appeal their tax assessments. I was completely a greenhorn in that area of county government, but it was very, very interesting. Mrs. Elizabeth Lenz served as our chairman, and she was more than helpful to the new members, as was Mr. Arthur Pryor, the Sparks city councilman representative. I say it was not only very educational and very interesting, but it was a fun experience, too; it really was, watching the different kind of people come in to appeal their tax assessment, their attitudes and their conduct. Some of them came in with a chip on their shoulder and left with a bigger chip on their shoulder. Some came in just very, very belligerent and very angry. Some of them came in because they didn't quite understand why their tax assessment had been increased, were very unpleasant. Some were really even rather amusing. I couldn't help but mention Mr. LaVere Redfield, who owns about eighty square miles of Washoe County, after several parcels had been brought up and he had talked, hoping that we would decrease the assessment and we didn't, he said very nicely to us that it would probably, from there on, be to his advantage if he didn't talk [laughing]. He has quite a sense of humor.

Well, then, along with [the] board of equalization, this is a legislative year, so we

are all very much interested in legislation as it pertains to the county. So there have been many trips to Carson City and talking with committees, and I've found that very interesting—not always to my liking, but very interesting.

Of course, as a county official, we get a lot of telephone calls now at our home number. Some mornings, they've been as frequent as (my wife keeping track) four an hour. And where the chairman gets many more, my wife and I think that's a large number of telephone calls. There are very few evenings that we don't get several calls. Of course, every day, we get calls in the evening between five and seven. And I might mention this, because I think it's interesting. My wife'll get calls during the day that she will tell them, "Now, if you will give me your name and number, I will have Mr. Nelson call you when he returns." But they go right on talking to her about the particular problem that they called about. And sometimes, they will keep her on the phone fifteen, twenty, twenty-five minutes, and she may or may not get their name, or she may or may not get their telephone number. Or if they say, "Well, I won't leave my number, but I will call Mr. Nelson after five-thirty this evening," then they don't call.

So we don't necessarily know the answers for that kind of call, except that some of those people might just be lonely people that want someone to talk to. Or because my wife is very understanding when she's on the phone with them, they probably feel better having unloaded (laughing) and feel that it isn't necessary to talk to anybody else. Of course, I think some of them feel, too, maybe, that it's not going to necessarily help them to call and talk to me. Maybe they know that it's a zoning deal, or it's this, that, or the other, that the commissioners probably can't do much of anything about it anyway, and they

maybe ring the first time when they're a little bit angry, and maybe they get over their anger. But I say the different calls are very interesting.

I have had a few people remind me to date that I did say during the campaign that I was interested in the green, with the ecology bit. And I said, "Well, I was then, and I am now. But you have to remember, too, I'm just one member of the board, and, also, that the board of county commissioners cannot necessarily perform little miracles, or can we necessarily please everyone." And I tell them, too, when you sit on the board of equalization, you're damned if you do, and you're damned if you don't. All in all, it's very interesting, but it's a much busier position than I ever thought it was.

So, where I in the past have been very critical of certain things with county commissioners—and I admit that I had been critical—knowing what I know now, I'm sure I would have been less critical. I also think where I have not been as understanding as I might have been with boards of county commissioners in the past, I think, now, I would have been a little more understanding. Because where I was in the probation department, I realize now I was just one little deal in the whole chain of events for them.

But it's a very challenging kind of work, and I fully intend to continue as I have been doing. You need the popularity at election time to win, but I'm certainly not going to vote for popularity now that I am a member. I have to vote now for conviction and let the chips fall where they will. Of course, I have found, too, that quite a few times already, there a matter comes to a vote, I find myself voting for the lesser of two evils.

For example, the zone change had already been granted by the old board, and the people came in for a special use permit to put a trailer overlay on property west of Verdi,

where, if I had my choice, there wouldn't be any change of zoning that would change any of that agricultural property, and particularly, the pastures and meadowland, and the rest of it. Well, this change of zoning had already been granted. So we were talking about these trailer overlays, and I imagine they sensed opposition on the part of the board, so then they did speak very frankly that we do already have the alternative of single dwellings or single residences with septic tanks. And this particular meadowland is south of the river and near the river (and we all are very concerned about polluting the Truckee), and the trailer overlay would have a sewage disposal system where it would use the evaporation ponds up on the hillside and would be one plant, that, if I can believe what I was told, would do far less as far as polluting the river than would all these individual septic tanks. I mean, these people are fully aware of what everything is, and I say, like in that case, we weren't really given a choice to vote. We were explained the lesser of two evils, and so you vote for—in that way. But if I had my druthers, or my choice, I would have voted to leave it meadowland.

We're running into that all over the county. Most of the people in business here are interested in more people and more business, and they call it progress, and I sometimes, already, am beginning to wonder if we're going to be able to do what we'd like to do about the environment, or the green here, or protecting the Truckee, or if we will be able to provide more parks for the people (as we know the people want more parks); or, like where we're finding, too, that welfare gobbles up such a large amount of the budget, if we'll be able to buy land for parks. So I say, it's a real challenge to know just exactly what to do and how you can move in a positive direction in the best interests of the total community. But we're still going to try.

I think that more people have been more concerned about the environment in the Lake Tahoe area, both South Shore and North Shore, because the damage to the environment is so easily discernible. They have chopped down so many trees, and they have damaged so many streams, and so much runoff from the streams has reached the lake, and the lake is so definitely being polluted, and it shows more. We have a density of population right now at Incline area. And I say, it's so obvious. But I think we're doing just as much damage here in the Truckee Meadows as we're doing at Tahoe, only I say it's easier to discern. I've heard Lake Tahoe described as "one of the seven wonders of the world" (and I, personally, have always thought of it as one of the wonders of the world), and man is destroying it.

The Incline area hadn't had a new tax assessment for years, so last year, they had the assessment prior to the board of equalization meeting in '70, and, of course, most of the people protesting were out of that area. Then in this past year, too, as you know, we had the census count, and a lot of people in the Incline area believe that there are more people in residence there than the census figures show, so we have a hassle going now as to whether our board will or will not authorize another census. Then part of the populace wants to incorporate, and part of them do not. A lot of them think that they are not getting the value for their tax dollar; for example, there's a lot of protest as to police protection for the area. There's a certain justification in all areas. And we know, as does Sheriff Bob Galli, that there should be more staff at the Lake.

Of course, Lake Tahoe has problems peculiar to any recreation area, because a lot of the homes and a lot of the summer cottages are still used, even though the winter skiing



recreation has increased so much and so many more people today come in to Tahoe. In fact, I guess it's almost as busy now, in the winter, as in the summer. But the severe storms do slow it up some. But there are a lot, still, of empty homes and empty cottages in the winter months that are burglarized. Their incidence of burglary is very high, and these people feel that they should have better police protection. And I agree with them; I think they should, too. But there again, it'll be the matter of the number of dollars available to us for the '71-'72 budget, as to just how much money we can put in Sheriff Galli's budget to improve the services. I don't deny the need; I just say it will be how well we can cooperate with the requests for services.

The general public has resented high-rise construction in the Tahoe area. A lot of the residents there resent condominium-type, or apartment-type dwellings. And they are density population deals; there's no question about it. But these people that own the property are naturally very much interested in making as much money as they can with the property. Of course, you can put a lot more units of a condominium-type on an acre parcel, or a five-acre parcel, or a ten acre parcel than you can single-family dwellings. And a lot of the property owners in that area have owned this land for a long time; whether they would admit it or not, it has been for speculation, just as it is here in the Truckee Meadows.

Tahoe's a very, very popular area for recreation. Along with Reno and Las Vegas, the top entertainers are at the clubs in that area. You can go up to ski and go to one of the fabulous dinner shows at night, and also gamble, if you're so inclined. So it does make it a popular area for the tourists and the residents, because residents gamble and ski and like to go to dinner shows, too.

Right at this time, I couldn't even venture a guess as to how satisfactorily our board is going to function in the eyes of the people interested in the ecology and the environment and the pollution, as I am so very interested myself. In fact, that's one of the reasons I ran. But sometimes—and I'm already learning—reality is a bit different than what we'd like it to be.

Well, all of these issues are controversial, and each side, as far as I am concerned, has merit. The people who have homes up there for retirement or for summer living, or even for year-round living that were always happy to see Labor Day come for the quiet winter months now have the influx of the ski season and the winter recreation, and they're resentful of the change of the quiet kind of life that they were living. I understand what they're saying. The people who are in business up there, both home and business, they like to see business grow. That's natural for anybody that has their money invested in a business, that they want business to grow. They're in it to make money. The people that would like to see a recount on the census know that it would bring more money, as we commissioners know, in for taxes. Others believe that it's just wishful thinking, and another count would possibly reveal some increase, like maybe a couple, three hundred people, but not the several thousand that others are claiming would be discovered in a recount. There, again, now, I say I think both sides have merit.

With the construction development in the area, there are many more homes, so there are many more streets, so they have really serious traffic problems. And they do have. I have been driving up there at different times, and I know just what they mean, that a lot of these intersections are blind, and that there is a lot of excessive speed, and that there is confusion in the area because of the names



of streets. As you know, the state changed the main, number one state road there from down along the lake and moved it farther up the hillside. In fact, just about the time that Mr. [Nathan] Jacobson opened King's Castle, by changing the main state highway, they put him off the mainly traveled, major road. I'm not that experienced with highways and roads, but I say, there is a traffic problem there. I've experienced it myself.

The clearance of roads in the winter months is a real headache to the county. Yet, Boise-Cascade wants to go even at a higher elevation with that (I think I'm saying it correctly) Unit No. 6. I think all of those residences would be above the 7,000-foot level. Naturally, the county commissioners are reticent, too, for the construction of more roads if they were only going to serve very, very few homes.

Then there is the problem of the winter clearance. As you know, our winter storms are very hard on roads. So each spring, it's the remodeling, the rebuilding of the roads and filling up the chuckholes, and all the rest of it. And [a lot of] the road that are in the Incline area right now are in very poor condition. Then a lot of roads in our city and in our county here in the Truckee Meadows are in very poor condition, too. So I'm finding out what others have told me, that it's difficult to please all of the people all of the time. So you just have to do the best job you can do with the monies available.

[A few words now about the functioning of the board.] As you know, the board of county commissioners in Washoe County is a five-man board. At the last election, three seats were to be filled, and they were the at-large, which includes the Incline area, as it includes the entire county; and then the unincorporated, which specifically includes the Incline, as it does Gerlach and Pleasant

Valley, and the rest of it; and then, the two representatives from the city of Reno and one from the city of Sparks. And I can mention right here, too, that population wise, it's quite a distribution. There are about, with the last census, 24,000 residents in Sparks, 24,000 in the unincorporated area, and about 72,000 people in the city of Reno. So, actually, where they're discussing reapportionment in the legislature, our five seats actually are rather naturally apportioned. Then by our own residence: Mr. Joseph Coppa, who represents Sparks, of course, resides there; Mr. Howard McKissick, who is not one of the new commissioners, and who has been a commissioner for ten years, resides in northwest Reno; Mr. Robert Rusk, who is a new commissioner for the at-large seat, resides in the southwest; and Mr. Cunningham, who I replaced, resided in the southeast, and I, also, reside in the southeast. So I say we are, really, in residence and population wise, in keeping with one man, one vote that the legislature has to concern themselves with. Now, they may change this. I have no way of knowing. But I say we do have a natural reapportionment, just as we exist.

Mr. Howard [F.] McKissick, Sr., has represented the city of Reno on the board for ten years. Mr. Cunningham, who I defeated, was in his eighth year. The unincorporated area was represented by Mr. Leo Sauer, and that area is represented now by Mr. Roy Pagni, who was elected chairman by the board (Mr. Coppa is vice chairman). Then Mr. Rusk replaces Mr. J. C. "Specs" McKenzie, who had served on the board twelve years, and, of course, he represented the Incline area, as well as the rest of the county. I think it's significant because it was the dissatisfaction with the residents in the Incline area with their representative on the

board of county commissioners, and also, the dissatisfaction with the people in the rest of the unincorporated area with Mr. Sauer. I think where both men were defeated in the primary, I'd have to say that was another factor in my winning, because people strongly indicated their desire for a change. So where Mr. Cunningham wasn't specifically representing the Incline area as were Mr. McKenzie and Mr. Sauer, I think they all got lumped in the desire for a change, and I say I'd have to say it was a factor, too, in my winning, fortunately for me.

The board of five would ideally function at all times, with all five members being very concerned with the total county and the total community. And when I ran, I used that as part of my campaign, my interest in "total community." I think that you should serve all of the voters within the county to the best of your ability. I think most of the board are interested in the total community. I would have to say in all honesty, though, that we have one member who has served many years who is resenting proposed changes in that, "We didn't do it that way before." Well, I think there's going to be a lot of changes take place because they're necessary and because they didn't do them before.

For example, there has been a conflict within the board because some of us favored remodeling our room in the courthouse, and Mr. McKissick has had articles in the paper about it, that it was a waste of the taxpayers' dollar (and the several of us don't feel that it was any waste) because he says that part of the courthouse is going to be torn down in a few years. We feel that it not only will not be torn down in a few years, we feel that none of us will probably be alive at the time that kind of change takes place in the courthouse. And because Mr. Pagni and Mr. Coppa and I meet with the citizens of the area in the

commissioners' room there almost daily, and the three of us are there almost daily, we felt that the people, if—. I think we were much more concerned about the people than we were ourselves; it wasn't that bad. But also, Mr. McKissick, in the article in the paper, neglected to say it was the previous board that had budgeted the funds for the carpeting and the drapes, which was the principal amount expended because the work was all done by county employees, anyway, who work on all the grounds and the buildings. Also, it was a hassle of whether using paint or paneling. The upkeep with paneling is much less than with painting, and we didn't feel that it was a luxury expenditure at all.

Then there has been conflict within the commission with the budget, because the manager and Mr. McKissick naturally are in the habit of handling the budget as it has been handled over the years. Several of us are very interested in the particulars and the details and salaries, and the rest of it, just rather than glossing over and putting our name to a blanket approval for something. Even though it's still tentative budget, we're interested in the particulars. Especially where this year, it's going to have to be a very tight budget, we're more than ever interested in all of the details so that we can continue the services that do exist, and hopefully improve them where possible, and hopefully not cut in any area, if we can do differently.

So I'm sorry to say I don't think we're working as an ideal board at all, and there is conflict because of some of us new ones having defeated some of the old ones, and I suppose that happens in most areas, most times, with politics. But I'm hoping that as the months go by that we'll move into a much more cooperative body and be working together rather than pulling apart. And there is pulling apart going right now.

I think there are practices in county government that some of us would like to see changed, and they were reasons that we ran, also. Some of the county departments, personally, I feel that they're overstuffed. I know that a couple of the other commissioners feel that some of the departments are overstuffed, that we could have a more efficient government if these employees came to work on time, had fewer coffee breaks, and actually completed their full day. In one department in particular, they're practically stumbling over each other, there's so many employees. We'd like to remedy that. I think some departments' salaries are at a lower level than they should be. I think there're some departments where the salaries are higher than they might necessarily be and still be fair. I think there has been considerable favoritism. I don't think, [as] a board of county commissioners, that we can afford to have favorites or show favoritism. And I don't want it to sound, either, like I'm Mr. Perfect and I want everyone to conform with my thinking. I say I do sincerely believe we can move in a more positive direction in the best interests of the total community, as I campaigned on. That's what I want to do.

Like I said then, and I'll say now, I'm still violently opposed to spot zoning. And yet, we've been involved in a number of things since I've been on the board that are spot zoning. I think they are. And I think I voted for a couple things that are really spot zoning. But as I said earlier, we get involved in the lesser of two evils.

Mr. Coppa served until the general election in '70 on the outside; he was not with the "in" group. He certainly is with the group now because of his invaluable experience to the rest of us. He's very much concerned, as he should be, for the city of Sparks, but he is just as concerned for Incline, and he is just as concerned for Gerlach. And he's been making

an honest endeavor for two years, a little over two years, but it's just now beginning to be felt.

There was an immediate contest with the board for the election of the chairman and vice chairman. Mr. Pagni and I wanted Mr. Coppa to serve as chairman because of his two years' experience and because we felt that he would serve very well in the position of chairman. Mr. McKissick wanted to be chairman again, and he's already been chairman twice. So I say that sort of divided [us] right in the very beginning. So we sort of have a three-group and a two-group. And that may go on most of the time with county commissioners; I don't know, really. But I know that it has been in evidence most of the time in the last twenty years when I've been involved in county government. (Mr. Richard Streeter, who represented Sparks at one time, was on the "out" group, too, as a member of the board. And I can remember others past years who were.)

I say there us an ideal, and I think we should be working towards the ideal, and working in unity. We're not working in unity now. Also, over the years, it has apparently become a very entrenched pattern for the county manager to handle everything for the board, and it had reached a point where the tail was wagging the dog. And this board has no intention of letting it continue, for the tail to wag the dog. We intend to be responsible for our own positions and the county manager to be responsible to us, and we're not about to have him make out a budget for the county and us just give the blanket approval to it, because that's what they've been doing. And if people want to call us personally, as they are doing—I think I've only referred one individual so far to either the head of a department or to Mr. [C. B.] Kinnison. They have presented their problem to me, and I have told them that I would get an answer for

them, and then I go to Mr. Kinnison to get the answer, in writing, for them. But I guess for a long time, it has been a very minor part-time kind of position where they met three days out of the month, had what special things they had to, and then let the county manager and department heads take over and run the county. Well, we think that if we assume that responsibility that we'll improve the whole deal from top to bottom. That's what we're going to set out to do.



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## CONCLUSION

In retrospect, I left the teaching profession, as I have stated, to help my father. And I thought many times that— oh, I guess I felt badly that I had left the teaching profession. Many times I have wished that my career had continued in the teaching profession. But our world, too, does have funny little ways of changing our lives, and I got into this profession of probation quite by accident, and yet to know that, since 1961, the children in this area were not held in jail, I guess that's one of my very real satisfactions. And I guess there I would use that word "proud." I guess I am proud that I was a part of that endeavor. And I am glad for many, many things of that twenty years.

Building the detention home was a crisis time in my own life because I was wanting one thing, and somebody else was wanting someone else, and it was a time of clash and a pulling apart rather than working together, and I think that that is generally something that is—well, it's a kind of frustration, and it does something to your emotions. As the years went on, I found, too, that it was more

difficult for me to gladly accept another speaking engagement and to gladly pack a bag for another three-day conference, and to have real enthusiasm for a week's jaunt around the state to the institutions. I guess others might word that as maybe I was getting tired. And maybe I was. It did get to a point that attending a lot of meetings became a real effort.

Where I believe that I'm a rather even-dispositioned individual, I found it more and more difficult to keep my cool and to stay calm inside. And I did go through that ulcer bit, as I told you, and I did have other surgery, and then I did have the surgery on my hands, I think all of those things together made me think more about retirement, and that in several years, I would have completed thirty years. And then when thirty came around, I talked myself into one more year. That would have been twenty with the department, and it's, I guess, a nice, round number.[Laughing] And other things; I couldn't even tell you now necessarily all the thoughts I did have. But where I would admit



I probably started thinking of a retirement date maybe too soon, the last several years it did get to a point with me that I saw it as a welcome change. I would have to admit, too, that I had some very serious concern about my physical health.

Then there were pressures. If part of that would come out as weakness on my part, then I would have to accept it as part weakness. But I had been involved in so many meetings with so many people, again, primarily in money, that it got to a point where I could hardly face up on Monday knowing that at Tuesday at eleven, I would have to sit down at a table with some of these people and start again into what, in my thinking, was the same old hassle. And in fairness, I would have to say that some of it was a clash of personality. With some of these people, it was not that I was always right and they were always wrong; it wasn't that. I was wrong lots of times. But it got to be a real hassle with myself of really not wanting to get into further argument and disagreement on things that appeared to me as plain as the nose on my face. The need is here, the case load has increased to this level, we are into this area of handling these things, and we do need, and I say, it was so clear to me. And possibly I reached a point, too, where I didn't have the stamina or the courage any longer to back down in some of these things that I didn't think were of such great importance that they [were] made into.

Anyway, having made the talks week in and week out for a detention home, and had attended the meetings week in and week out through all the phases of getting the detention home, then building it, then putting it into operation, then running it, and then to, again, be in planning stage for remodeling and enlarging, it just did become as much [that] where it was my responsibility, it also got to be my personal burden.

Where little, inconsequential things can trigger important actions, it was the tact that I would have to work with and sit at these meetings with the county manager, with commissioners, and all that sort of thing again. And I suppose the things I was remembering from the period of about ten years earlier—.

Maybe I exaggerated the problem in my own mind, but what ever I did, I reached a point where I felt that I didn't have the court support that I deserved; I didn't feel that I had the loyalty and support of some of the staff that I felt I deserved. And I felt that many factors entered into all of this that should not have been a part of it at all, when we should've always just been talking for the concern of the children, and will this be in the best interest of the children in the community.

I never lost sight of the fact that I had a responsibility to the community as well as the children; I didn't. Only the probation department now has it in a reverse situation. They put, in their philosophy, today the community first, and then the child. I had the child first, and then the community. That could be the subject for a debate. And they may feel that they're right. I personally feel that I'm right. I believe that in being of assistance to the child, you are of assistance to the parent. If you are [of] assistance to the child and the parent, then you are of assistance to the community. And I see it moving in that direction.

But at any rate, when I got into the year of 1968, I saw July of 1969 as a good time to terminate that employment. And I would have to say in all honesty that I do not regret my decision. I'm glad that I retired when I did. I'm very grateful for the months of retirement that I did have to unwind. And then I am pleased that I have this opportunity now to serve as a commissioner.

Politics and a political office isn't necessarily what I thought it would be. Part of it is what I assumed it would be. It's more complicated than I thought. It doesn't have any easy solutions, as I also found in probation. Maybe there aren't many today in most of the professions or in life. There seem to be so many pressures and so many areas where you can use a dollar and everyone clamoring for more service and objecting to more tax. And I will have to admit that I have some of the sane feelings [laughing] with this, that, and the other. So I guess I would have to say that I am pleased with the fact that I did serve twenty years. But I'm also pleased that at the end of that time, I did retire.

I'm going to be interested in this county probation department and probation in this state as long as I live here. I still go to Wittenberg Hall to see some of the staff and to have lunch with them. But I know that in underneath it, it's really to see which children are there, and are not, and really, what they're doing, and to learn how it's operating. I mean, I rationalize [laughing] on the one hand, but that's why I go by. And I was there last week again, and I'm very pleased with what they did do with the remodeling and the addition on the whole. There're some things that I don't like. I'm still disappointed that they didn't put up an administrative wing, but we may be able to get into that later. That they did with the kitchen, they're adding the classroom, and now having a much larger library area, all those things couldn't please me more. And actually, I'm really satisfied with the whole thing.

I would be very remiss at this time if I didn't say certain things to you, and I will certainly want them included and not deleted from this little deal that you and I have been working on for quite a while. But I want to express my very deep appreciation for your

kindness, for your expertise, which you have in great abundance, for your very real personal kindness, understanding, and patience with me because I've made it draw out over a long period of time because of my inability to get here at times, your patience with my breaking appointments. And in this time of conclusion, I would have to, in all honesty, say to you that this has been a very, very real pleasure for me. And not that I've not only thoroughly enjoyed doing it, but our personal association with this has meant a great deal to me, and I am very pleased that you saw fit to select me for one. I am very pleased; everything about the taping sessions, I couldn't make one single criticism to you, not one. And I say I would want this to show and to appear in this little book when it ever gets to that point, because I mean it just as sincerely and as honestly as anything I've said to you when we started the first tape. I thank you deeply for your kindness.



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